

EMERGENT STRATEGY AND GRAND STRATEGY



How American Presidents Succeed in Foreign Policy

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Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy

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Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy

*How American Presidents Succeed
in Foreign Policy*

Ionut Popescu

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To Caroline and Anna

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Preface

Is following a coherent grand strategy the key to achieving successful outcomes in American foreign policy? For many experts in the academia and in the Washington think tank world, the answer is yes. Policymakers are usually criticized when they take seemingly incremental actions based on short-term considerations. But could such actions actually converge into a successful emergent strategy over time? Such a view, commonly found in the business world and in some parts of the strategic studies community, goes against the conventional wisdom of the political science literature on American grand strategy. And yet, when one examines key policies and strategies adopted by US presidents over the past seventy years, as I do in this book, the relation between following a coherent long-term grand strategy and achieving success in foreign policy is much more tenuous than commonly assumed.

There is a narrative inside Washington that credits American diplomat George Kennan with designing a Containment grand strategy that successfully guided America to victory in the Cold War, but this view is grounded more on myth than historical evidence. While Kennan's ideas contributed in some ways to the formation of American strategy in the 1940s, many of the most successful elements of President Harry S. Truman's Containment framework, such as NATO and the Truman Doctrine, came out of an emergent process and were in fact at odds with Kennan's designs. Similarly, another president credited with achieving significant grand strategic success, Ronald Reagan, relied at least as much on improvisation and adaptation as he did on the implementation of farsighted strategic plans. Not only was the Grand Strategy paradigm not as important as commonly thought in terms of bringing about successful outcomes, but following a long-term grand strategy has at times led to negative consequences that otherwise might have been avoided, as detailed in this book.

What are the implications of these findings for the conduct of US foreign policy and strategy? The most important conclusion to be drawn from the case studies is that, unlike what many Grand Strategy experts contend, senior policy-

makers should be skeptical of the idea that formulating and implementing a long-term national security strategy is the road to a successful foreign policy legacy. Instead, they should prioritize learning from the almost unavoidable mistakes they will make early in their tenures and also focus on determining how their initial goals and strategic vision must be adapted in light of the inevitable surprises and the unexpected challenges and opportunities they will be facing while in office.

In the early stages of the Trump administration, the discussion of grand strategy and emergent strategy presented in this book is more relevant than ever. The new president brought to office a CEO's management style similar in many ways to the Emergent Strategy paradigm developed in the business literature. His penchant for improvisation and his skepticism of formal planning processes both indicate that this administration's foreign policy decision-making will likely provide a very good example of the potential risks and benefits of relying on Emergent Strategy. It is crucial to keep in mind, however, that the key to the successful formation of emergent strategies is the ability to *learn* and *adapt*. Therefore, more so than the worrisome foreign policy plans and ideas he brought to office, Trump's actual legacy will depend on his administration's response to the inescapable trials and tribulations of the office in the years ahead.

I could not have researched and written this book in the way that I did without the generous financial support provided by the Smith Richardson Foundation through the Strategy and Policy Fellows Program 2015–2016 (Grant No. 2015-0952, *Shape or Adapt: The Planning of American Grand Strategy*). I am most grateful to Allan Song, my program officer, for supporting this project from its early stages and for believing that it could make a contribution to the policy and scholarly literatures on American foreign policy and grand strategy. Dale Stewart, Kathy Lavery, and Paula Landesberg at Smith Richardson did a superb job in facilitating the logistics of the grant disbursement, as did the team at my host institution, Old Dominion University Research Foundation, led by Nicole Swartz, Maria Delacruz, Kim Ortolano, and Larry Heitzman. I thank them all for their extraordinary professionalism and competence. Similarly, I would not have had the opportunity to dedicate one year primarily to the writing of this book at Old Dominion University without the support of Francis Adams, Aaron Karp, and Regina Karp; I owe the three of them a huge debt of gratitude. I would also like to thank Eric Patterson, Mary Manjikian, and Paul Bonicelli for advising and supporting me in putting together the grant proposal for the Smith Richardson Foundation. I conducted the final edits of the book at the Clements Center for National Secu-

riety at the University of Texas at Austin, and I am very grateful to Will Inboden, Paul Miller, and the rest of the Clements team for their support in crossing the finish line.

The intellectual origins of this project lie in the work I did in graduate school at Duke University, where the American Grand Strategy program, thanks to its research resources and the extraordinarily accomplished faculty associated with it, arguably represents the world's best academic environment for undertaking political science research on this topic. At Duke, I was blessed with a wonderful adviser, Peter Feaver, who selflessly and tirelessly taught me to think more analytically, write more clearly, and hence produce better research on American foreign policy. He also generously supported my research financially during graduate school summers thanks to grants from the Bradley Foundation, connected me with Washington-based former policymakers and foreign policy experts for research interviews, and mentored me both professionally and personally. For all this, and for his kindness, support, and friendship in the years after I left graduate school, I will always be grateful. I am also most thankful to Bruce Jentleson, Alex Roland, and David Rohde, three other Duke professors who spent countless hours providing me with excellent feedback on earlier versions of this research, challenging my ideas, sharpening my arguments, and thus vastly improving the quality of this study. Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my early mentors who first introduced me to the fascinating world of international relations and US national security policy: Derek Shearer and Larry Caldwell at Occidental College, Tony Cordesman at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Frank Hoffman at the National Defense University.

No part of writing this book has been more rewarding for me than the interviews I conducted with former policymakers. I would like to especially thank the following former US government officials for taking the time to be interviewed for this project, some of them more than once, and for the excellent insights provided to me during these meetings: Elliott Abrams, Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, Shawn Brimley, Richard Danzig, Amb. Eric Edelman, Andrew Erdmann, Douglas Feith, Stephen Hadley, Andrew Hoehn, Thomas Mahnken, Jeremy Rosner, James Steinberg, Jim Thomas, Col. Troy Thomas, and Paul Wolfowitz. I would also like to thank one more former government official who preferred to remain anonymous. Throughout the long process of researching and writing this book on the formation of American grand strategy, I greatly benefitted from the excellent suggestions, constructive criticisms, and insights received from many friends and colleagues with expertise on this topic, including Quay Barnett, Andrew Bell,

Nora Bensahel, Hal Brands, Seth Cantey, Aaron Chatterji, Joe Collins, Colin Dueck, Matthew Fehrs, James Goldgeier, John Hamre, Richard Hooker, William Inboden, John Joseph, Charles Miller, Henry Nau, Nina Silove, Kiron Skinner, Jeremi Suri, Jordan Tama, Barry Watts, Thomas Wright, and Steve Yetiv. I thank them all for their gracious help.

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It is my great privilege and honor to publish my first book with the prestigious Johns Hopkins University Press. I would like to express my gratitude to Elizabeth Demers, Meagan Szekely, Kira Bennett Hamilton, Hilary Jacqmin, Gene Taft, the anonymous peer reviewers, and to the other members of the JHUP team who helped transform the manuscript into a published work.

By God's grace, I wrote most of this book at a time when I had also been blessed with getting married and having a baby. My loving wife, Caroline, was invaluable in supporting me and allowing me to focus on writing the manuscript, and our daughter, Anna, did as well as could be reasonably expected of any infant in terms of not disturbing her father's efforts. I dedicate this book to both of them.

Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy

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Grand Strategy, Emergent Strategy, and Foreign Policy Success

In retrospect all successful policies seem preordained. Leaders like to claim prescience for what has worked, ascribing to planning what usually starts as a series of improvisations.

HENRY KISSINGER

Henry Kissinger's appreciation for the role of improvisation, as opposed to strategic planning, in bringing about a foreign policy success is one instance where a policymaker's account differs from that of scholars of grand strategy, but it's not an isolated example. According to a story circulating in Washington at the time, President Harry S. Truman's secretary of state, Dean Acheson, offered the following answer to a reporter when asked to define *strategy*: "Every once in a while, you have to give a speech, so you take a look at what you've been doing in the past few months, you write it out, and that's your strategy."¹ And arguably the most praised American grand strategist of the Cold War, George Kennan, once remarked that "American policy since World War II was not based 'on any global plan,' but owed much to a great deal of improvisation."² This is certainly not how many scholars came to describe the formation of the Containment strategy that ultimately contributed to the successful conclusion of the Cold War forty-five years later.

Kennan, and his successor at the State Department Policy Planning Staff, Paul Nitze, received praised for designing long-term grand strategic frameworks that guided US actions during the Cold War. Influential historians credit Kennan's most famous planning documents, the "X Article" and the "Long Telegram," with laying out the early foundation for Containment.³ Daniel Yergin described Kennan's "Long Telegram" as a highly influential document akin to a "bible for American policymakers," a piece of analysis circulated widely inside the high levels of government.⁴ Kennan served as the first director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff (1947–1950), essentially the chief strategic planning position inside the US government at the time. His reputation as the "father of Contain-

ment” was solidified in the academic world when historian John Lewis Gaddis, in the most authoritative study of US Cold War grand strategy, called Kennan “[Containment’s] chief architect.”⁵ And on the dust jacket of Kennan’s recently released authorized biography written by Gaddis, former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft restates this Washington conventional wisdom: “George Kennan was the great architect of the Cold War strategy of containment.”⁶ In addition to Kennan, Nitze is also held in high regard as one of the designers of Containment. His most important contribution was directing the National Security Council (NSC) team that drafted the legendary NSC-68 grand strategy document. Ernest May, the editor of an entire volume dedicated to the formulation and impact of NSC-68, remarked that some writers “hailed it as the master plan that brought victory in the Cold War,” and, citing the need for a post-Cold War grand strategy, they called for a new iteration of such a grand design in the 1990s.⁷

More recently, based on what they perceived as strategic incoherence during the Barack Obama era, James Goldgeier and Jeremi Suri issued a similar call for the Trump administration to formulate a new grand design to guide America’s role in the world: “The irony is that in this moment of rapidly shifting international conditions and growing policy uncertainty, a cohesive strategy document is more necessary than ever before.”⁸ The alternative to following a grand design or framework is usually said to consist of ad-hoc, incoherent, and ultimately unsuccessful foreign policy decision-making. Josef Joffe pithily captures this view when he writes: “Great powers . . . don’t formulate strategy on the fly. They must have a strategy beforehand, one based on power and purpose that tells challengers what to expect.”⁹ Upon taking office, President Donald Trump was similarly warned by two scholars that he would “regret not having a grand strategy.”¹⁰ Therefore, despite the extraordinary recent interest in the field of American grand strategy, most discussions focus on debating competing grand strategic designs and on how to better implement such designs.¹¹ But what if successful strategic outcomes are not generally the product of strategic planning and farsighted designs?¹² Moreover, what if strategic failures sometimes occur *because* leaders pursue a long-term grand strategy that inhibits short-term learning and adaptation?

A smaller number of experts, mostly historians, conceptualize successful strategizing as a process of navigating through uncharted waters. Sir Lawrence Freedman’s latest work on this topic, *Strategy: A History*, examines a large body of scholarly arguments about strategy and ultimately concludes that the common view of strategy as *design* should change in favor of strategy as *process*: “Strategy

is often expected to start with a description of a desired end state, but in practice there is rarely an orderly movement to goals set in advance. Instead, the process evolves through a series of states, each not quite what was anticipated or hoped for, requiring a reappraisal and modification of the original strategy, including ultimate objectives.”¹³ Eliot Cohen is similarly critical of the practical relevance of Grand Strategy and instead emphasizes the role of adaptation, contingency, and discrete policy choices in achieving strategic success.¹⁴ This view echoes a recent theoretical development in the business strategy literature, where a model of Emergent Strategy based on learning and adaptation has been shown to lead to more successful outcomes than the traditional strategic planning paradigm. Even though other scholars like Freedman or Andrew Erdmann suggested that there might be value for policymakers in considering the concept of “emergent strategy” present in the business literature, my book is the first political science project (to my knowledge) that empirically tests the competing expectations of the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy models through a series of structured case studies in order to examine their relative merits in explaining strategic success and failure.¹⁵

In this book, I use the conceptual lenses of Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy to analyze some of the major strategic successes and failures of US foreign policy over the past seventy years in order to test each paradigm’s hypothesized connections between *how* leaders make strategic decisions and the outcomes they achieve. In the language of political science, my dependent variable is *strategic success*, while my binary independent variable is the type of decision-making *process*: either following the Grand Strategy paradigm or the Emergent Strategy one. Are decisions and policies flowing from a grand strategy more successful than those that emerge out of improvisations? And is the design and implementation of an overarching framework more important for the success of US foreign policy than the leaders’ ability to learn and improvise as they go along? Using the data sources and methodological approach outlined at the end of this chapter and in the appendix, these questions will be addressed throughout the following seven case studies:

- George Kennan, Containment, and the Beginning of the Cold War
- Globalizing Containment: NSC-68 and the Korean War
- Dwight D. Eisenhower, Project Solarium, and the New Look
- Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and Détente
- Ronald Reagan and the End of the Cold War

- George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and the Post–Cold War Era
- George W. Bush and the War on Terror

Before proceeding with the case studies, however, the rest of this chapter explores in more detail the two paradigms of Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy, and it discusses the thorny problem of how to analyze strategic success.

The Grand Strategy Paradigm

Many scholars and analysts implicitly or explicitly start from the assumption that successful national security strategy and foreign policy follows from what I describe in this book as a Grand Strategy model of foreign policy decision-making. As William Martel put it in language common across the field, the purpose of his recent book *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice* is “to provide a framework that helps guide scholars and policy makers as they articulate and implement a grand strategy.”¹⁶ In the view of Grand Strategy proponents like Martel, “for grand strategy to be effective, it is imperative for the state to clearly articulate the goals it intends to accomplish and how these will be achieved.”¹⁷ Successful grand strategy is often conceptualized in the security and strategic studies communities as an overarching design that guides the nation’s foreign policy decisions toward the accomplishment of its most important goals. Hal Brands writes that grand strategy represents “an integrated scheme of interests, threats, resources and policies,” and it forms a “conceptual framework that helps nations determine where they want to go and how they ought to get there.”¹⁸ Colin Dueck also emphasizes the importance of initial design and planning when he writes: “grand strategy involves the prioritization of foreign policy goals, the identification of existing and potential resources, and the selection of a plan or road map that uses those resources to meet those goals.”¹⁹ Similarly, Posen argues that a grand strategy “enumerates and prioritizes threats and potential political and military remedies to threats;” it also “contains explanations for why threats enjoy a certain priority, and why and how the proposed remedies would work.”²⁰ In his most recent book on this topic, consequently, Posen aims to “generate an appropriate grand strategy” that can guide current and future presidents.²¹

The Grand Strategy paradigm also has a strong influence on the conventional understanding in Washington circles of how successful strategy-making should take place. In fact, one of the most common criticisms of America’s post-Cold War presidents is that they did not follow a grand plan such as the one provided by

George Kennan outlining the grand strategy of Containment during the Cold War.²² This conventional wisdom about the so-called golden age of US strategic planning was captured by the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, Gideon Rose, who in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall launched a challenge to grand strategy scholars during the Clinton era to rise to the occasion and provide a new grand strategy similar to the one Kennan did in his famous “X Article”: “Now that the Cold War is over, we are looking for another X, someone who can come along and write the single article laying down the architecture that will shape our foreign policy for the next forty years.”²³ Clinton’s successor, George W. Bush, was similarly accused of a grand strategy “deficit.” One of the foremost experts of grand strategic studies, Gaddis, used his opening remarks at an academic conference in 2009 to express his worries that “there is a grand strategic deficit, that it’s been developing over the past two decades, and that its roots extend even further back than that.”²⁴ Similarly, Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments began their monograph *Regaining Strategic Competence* from the following premise: “The ability of the US national security establishment to craft, implement, and adapt effective long-term strategies against intelligent adversaries at acceptable costs has been declining for some decades.”²⁵ In more recent years, scholars and commentators similarly criticized the Obama administration for seemingly relying more on improvisation than on a grand design.²⁶ Lastly, even former defense secretary Robert Gates deplored the lack of a guiding grand strategy in a *Wall Street Journal* interview, despite having served as a top policymaker in two of the administrations he criticized.²⁷

If success in foreign policy comes from following a grand strategy, then the two most important tasks for policymakers are to carefully delineate the elements of a grand strategy and to subsequently implement those concepts via policy actions. Proponents of the Grand Strategy school emphasize the importance of careful analysis of tradeoffs in the formation of the strategic plans: “Devising a grand strategy means hard thinking about basic interests,” cautions Art, while Richard Betts similarly warns that “rational strategic behavior should be value maximizing, choosing appropriate means according to economic calculations of cost and benefit.”²⁸ Dueck spells out in more detail the requirements of a grand strategy: “Any grand strategy must provide concrete guidelines on the use of policy instruments such as: the form and level of defense spending, the nature and extent of strategic commitments abroad; the deployment of military forces abroad, peacefully or not; the use of foreign aid; the use of diplomacy with real or potential allies; and the diplomatic stance taken toward real or potential

adversaries.”²⁹ This model, thus, sets a high bar for the development of successful grand strategies: formulate and implement a long-term coherent plan to accomplish the nation’s highest goals.³⁰

In light of such a demanding task, how should the United States government go about achieving grand strategic success? One segment of the grand strategy literature focuses on recommending alternative designs to be implemented. Recent books by Barry Posen, Robert Art, Bill Martel, and Paul Miller, among others, make the case for specific overarching frameworks for American grand strategy.³¹ The logical assumption underpinning the heated debates among advocates of various paradigms, such as Restraint, Selective Engagement, or Conservative Internationalism, is that the content of the grand strategic plans formulated by an administration matters greatly for the shape of the grand strategy followed by that administration. Similarly, the Washington think tank community produces a constant stream of reports outlining grand strategic frameworks, confirming the prevalence of the Grand Strategy model in Washington policy circles.³²

Another part of the literature focuses on offering suggestions for improving how grand strategy should be conducted.³³ Terry Deibel’s recent elaboration of a “Linear Design Model” is an excellent example of such a scholarly effort to improve the strategic planning process by highlighting the sequence of steps needed to formulate and implement a long-term, coherent framework. Pithily incorporating the approach of the Great Strategy school, he outlines three principles for strategy formation:

1. Assess the international and domestic environments,
2. Analyze threats, opportunities, national interests, and the means of power and influence, and
3. Plan on how to use the available instruments of power to achieve the objectives.³⁴

Once the grand designs are in place, grand strategic success depends on a state’s ability to “completely integrate the military and nonmilitary elements of the state’s policies in a coherent, consistent and effective manner,” as Martel states. He goes on to further emphasize the top-down nature of this paradigm when he warns policymakers of the need to impose their strategic priorities on the bureaucracy: “In all cases, grand strategy should govern all the decisions that operate at the lower levels of strategy, and it should likewise be the case that the lower levels never determine or directly influence the state’s grand strategy.”³⁵

Proponents of Grand Strategy of course allow for some degree of learning and

adaptation during the course of implementing one's plans. However, they call primarily for *tactical* adaptation in the pursuit of a grand strategy, not for the kind of *strategic* adaptation and flexibility envisioned by Emergent Strategy proponents. Brands, for example, readily acknowledges the need for significant adaptation to inevitable surprises, and he credits the business literature for the insight that emergence has a role in the formation of good strategy. However, he downgrades the role of emergent learning to that of "showing significant tactical dexterity" in the pursuit of the overall goals and of the objectives set beforehand. For Brands, therefore, the key to successful strategizing is to be flexible while holding "a firm sense of purpose and priorities" and keeping "the ultimate objective in view."³⁶

Achieving *coherence* among ends, ways, and means is another major theme of the Grand Strategy school. Military strategist Frank Hoffman recently summarized this core concept of the strategic planning literature: "A grand strategy ensures that policy and strategic machinery are aligned and in good working order. Strategy should purposely link policy aims to competitive ways, with sustainable means . . . If a strategy employs a way that is inconsistent with policy, or if policymakers provide too little means, then it lacks coherence. The prospects for success are very suspect if coherence is not sustained."³⁷

The extraordinary attention paid by Grand Strategy advocates to the "matching of means and ends" is also emphasized in Gaddis's definition of grand strategy itself as essentially being about "the calculated relationship of means to large ends" and "about how one uses whatever one has to get to wherever it is one wants to go."³⁸ The first step to achieving this better balancing of means and ends, Brands argues, is *better planning*: "grand strategy should start with systematic planning, the setting of goals and priorities, and the outlining of a realistic course of action for realizing these objectives." While he acknowledges that plans may need to be adapted later on in the face of unexpected developments, Brands nevertheless warns that "if grand strategy is to have any value, planning—the effort to look beyond the current crisis and think rigorously about the future—will be extremely important."³⁹

Lastly, in light of the next section of this chapter, which draws directly on the cutting-edge scholarship on business strategy, it is interesting to note how the Grand Strategy school also draws parallels from the business literature, but does so from the arguments prevalent in the corporate world decades ago. In the relatively stable environment of the 1960s, strategy in the business world indeed focused on detailed, long-term planning. In an influential definition that resembles the arguments of Grand Strategy proponents, Alfred Chandler defined strategy in

1962 as “the determination of the long-run goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.”⁴⁰ In the 1980s, the focus shifted from long-term planning to the search for a competitive advantage. Harvard Business School’s Michael Porter, one of the main sources of inspiration for Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, defined strategy the following way: “Competitive strategy is about being different. It means deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value.”⁴¹ In the past quarter century, however, the business world largely moved away from traditional understandings of strategy as a long-term plan or a market “position.” Instead, the research shifted to an examination of the *process* by which successful organizations form their strategies.⁴²

In summary, for the Grand Strategy paradigm, the expectation is that strategic success follows from efficiently implementing an overarching grand strategic design. This does not mean that the pattern of policy decisions perfectly matched the initial plans; it simply means that the preponderance of evidence leads an observer to conclude that a long-term grand strategy guided the most important policy decisions of the era and contributed decisively to strategic success.

The Emergent Strategy Paradigm

Unlike the Grand Strategy view prevalent in the strategic studies community and Washington think tanks, the business literature offers a different model of achieving strategic success. Recent theoretical developments from this field can complement the conceptual understanding of strategy derived from works in history and political science.⁴³ There has been a long and productive “borrowing” of theoretical concepts between the academic disciplines of international relations and organizational theory/management literature. Kenneth Waltz’s classic *Theory of International Politics* famously uses the “state-firm analogy” to construct a neorealist theoretical model of international politics based on broad patterns of systemic/structural adjustment, as does Emily Goldman’s more recent study of strategic choices during peacetime.⁴⁴ There are some important similarities between firms and states when it comes to the making of strategy as well as some differences that will require a theoretical adaptation of this business model to the circumstances confronting policymakers.⁴⁵ On the one hand, both firms and states are large bureaucratic organizations that devote important resources to developing strategies for navigating a competitive and uncertain external environ-

ment. On the other hand, the *learning as adaptation* concept present in the business literature and in neorealist theory needs to be tailored to the case of grand strategy-making by incorporating a few insights from the foreign policy analysis academic subfield.⁴⁶ This is because the feedback received by leaders from the international system is much more ambiguous and open to interpretation than the feedback received by firms from the market.⁴⁷ Before these differences are explored further, however, it is useful to start by presenting the development of an Emergent Strategy model in the business world so as to better understand this different path to strategic success.

Mirroring the *design vs. process* dynamic in the national security scholarship debate between political scientists and historians, the business strategy debate has been conducted by the proponents of a “design school” focused on planning and execution versus those of an “emergence school” focused on learning and adaptation. This debate has led to the development of a Janus-faced definition of strategy as both a plan (“a direction, guide or course of action into the future, a path to get from here to there”) but also a pattern (“consistency in behavior over time.”)⁴⁸ The plan that an organization develops represents its intended strategy, while the pattern of behavior that it ends up pursuing over a longer period of time represents its realized strategy. When the realized strategy is the same as the intended strategy, the result is a deliberate strategy. Many times intentions are not realized in practice due to the difficult task of implementation, producing unrealized strategies. However, in addition to deliberate strategies and unrealized ones, there is one more possible outcome. As business theorists Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, and Joseph Lampel note in their comprehensive review of the literature on corporate strategy, “there is a third case, which we call emergent strategy—where a pattern realized was not expressly intended. Actions were taken, one by one, which converged over time to some sort of consistency or pattern.”⁴⁹ Similarly, a pair of McKinsey management consultants propose a definition that marks a shift from a design to an emergent process view of strategy-making: “Strategy is a handful of decisions that drive or shape most of a company’s subsequent actions, are not easily changed once made, and have the greatest impact on whether a company meets its strategic objectives.”⁵⁰

The key to understanding successful strategy as an emergent process is the business world insight that *successful strategies can form without being fully formulated in advance*. Advocates of this school of thought are skeptical about the real-world applicability of the Grand Strategy model of strategic planning, but they suggest that organizations can learn over time, thus allowing for coherent,

consistent, and successful strategies to emerge. One of the most influential proponents of the notion of Emergent Strategy, Henry Mintzberg, describes this difference as follows: “Deliberate strategy focuses on control—making sure that managerial intentions are realized in action—while emergent strategy emphasizes learning—coming to understand through the taking of actions what those intentions should be in the first place.”⁵¹ In other words, one’s goals could change during the strategy-making process based on the lessons learned while pursuing the initial goals. This is different than merely advocating tactical flexibility in the implementation of the initial grand strategy.⁵² Mintzberg describes a “crafting” image as the more effective path to success: the strategist should be more of “a pattern recognizer” and “a learner,” as opposed to a “designer.”⁵³

The Emergent Strategy model in the management theory literature evolved from several distinct bodies of scholarship that converged around the central themes of this school.⁵⁴ Mintzberg et al. in fact trace the origins of this school of thought back to the work of political scientist Charles Lindblom on “disjointed incrementalism.” Writing about the policy-making process inside the American government, Lindblom described it as “a never-ending process of successive steps in which continual nibbling is a substitute for a good bite.”⁵⁵ Business theorist James Brian Quinn later adopted Lindblom’s incrementalist approach, shifting from an understanding of the process as “disjointed” to one of “logical incrementalism.” Unlike Lindblom, Quinn argued that a series of incremental decisions could converge toward a common strategy. It is the responsibility of managers to “guide these streams of actions and events incrementally toward conscious strategy.” For Quinn, thus, “constantly integrating the simultaneous incremental processes of strategy formulation and implementation is the central art of strategic management.”⁵⁶

The idea of an incremental strategy-making process leading to positive outcomes even in the absence of a long-term framework is counterintuitive to a strategic studies community long dominated by Grand Strategy advocates. And yet this process view is gaining some prominent adherents. Sir Lawrence Freedman, while skeptical of some of Mintzberg’s empirical work, nevertheless concludes his comprehensive study of strategy with some observations supporting the emergent process view: “The picture of strategy that should emerge from this book is one that is fluid and flexible, governed by the starting point and not the end point . . . Strategy therefore starts with an existing state of affairs and only gains meaning by an awareness of how, for better or worse, it could be different. This view is quite different from those that assume strategy must be about reach-

ing some prior objective. It may well be more concerned with coping with some dire crisis or preventing further deterioration in an already stressful situation.”⁵⁷

In addition to echoing the Emergent Strategy school from the business world, Freedman’s observation points to a necessary modification of the emergence model before importing it to the realm of foreign policy. In the national security arena, the responses to a major crisis, and the long-term unintended consequences of such responses, have a great shaping impact on the contours of strategy formation. As scholars in the field of foreign policy analysis have shown, policy “lock-in” of some choices and “lock-out” of others lead to path dependency and to institutional arrangements that are hard to reverse due to bureaucratic inertia or domestic politics considerations.⁵⁸

In the interest of avoiding too stark a dichotomy, we should also point out that the emergence school does not deny the importance of at least *some* elements of deliberate planning. After all, as Mintzberg writes, “all real strategic behavior has to combine deliberate control with emergent learning.”⁵⁹ However, unlike the Grand Strategy school’s focus on formal strategic planning exercises, and then on implementing the strategies resulting from such planning, the Emergent Strategy school has a different role for strategists. According to the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a leading management consulting firm, this emergent adaptive approach “largely erases the distinction between planning and implementation, since successful strategies emerge from practice rather than from analysis and design.”⁶⁰ The last statement is essential for understanding the difference in focus between an approach focused on learning versus one focused on design and implementation. Certainly all real-world strategies have both designed and emergent elements to some extent; it is the emphasis given to each approach that distinguishes an emergent learning approach from one based on grand strategic planning and designs. “The most important thing a government can do is learn,”⁶¹ BCG concludes, thus setting up a contrast with the Grand Strategy school’s focus on deliberate strategy articulation and implementation as the keys to success.

In small ways, the business concept of Emergent Strategy has already attracted some attention from students of Grand Strategy and strategic planning. Drew Erdmann advises Washington policymakers to incorporate some of the latest insights of the business literature, including the following major themes: “Strategy is made from decisions and actions, not plans . . . Strategies evolve over time and involve both deliberate and emergent elements . . . Strategic planning should be about learning and adapting, not about the plans themselves.”⁶² Rather than being a “coherent story about the world and what you want to achieve in it,”

Bruce Jentleson and Steve Weber argue that strategy is about “adapting in the face of what you don’t know and what you don’t control and learning as you go.”⁶³ A few other policy analysts similarly mentioned the need to incorporate “emergent learning” into the conduct of foreign policy strategy.⁶⁴ If more effective strategies come from an emergent learning process, then understanding *how* leaders learn from their experiences and actions is essential for the Emergent Strategy model.

In the business strategy literature, BCG advances a concept of “adaptive strategy” as the key to strategic success. The role of leadership should *not* be to dictate a strategy based on “analysis, prediction, and deduction” but rather to set “optimal conditions for the continuous emergence of superior strategies through an adaptive—or evolutionary—process.”⁶⁵ Another influential business scholar of emergent strategy, Karl Weick, offered a theoretical model based on a biological model of variation/selection/retention to explain the process of learning.⁶⁶ Therefore, in the business world learning is generally conceived simply as a trial-and-error process of adapting to the feedback received from the market. This view of *learning as adaptation* is in fact similar to how structural realists like Waltz conceptualize the quest for security in the international arena.⁶⁷ For the specific issue of how learning occurs when it comes to the formation of strategy, however, I will move beyond the business strategy literature and the realist “structural adjustment” models and turn to the foreign policy analysis scholarship for a more complex view of learning.

Contrary to the *learning as adaptation* view referenced above, my Emergent Strategy model adopts the view of emergent learning as a cognitive process.⁶⁸ The straightforward model of learning as adaptation to systemic external conditions is ultimately unsatisfactory, as shown in the detailed political psychology literature on the peculiar cognitive processes by which leaders actually draw implications from their recent actions. Philip Tetlock among others objected to the *learning as adaptation* idea by highlighting how the feedback from a leader’s actions is far more ambiguous and open to subjective interpretations than a business leader’s profit-driven moves in the marketplace.⁶⁹ More specifically, the lessons learned from one’s actions are filtered through one’s values or worldview, and thus their meaning is influenced by factors other than the external feedback from the system. Tetlock persuasively argues that “what counts as a rewarding or punishing consequence in the international environment critically depends on the ideological assumptions of the beholder.”⁷⁰ A necessary modification to the business version of the emergence model, therefore, is adopting a view of learning that is more in line with this cognitive understanding of foreign policy decision-making.

In the formation of an emergent strategy, the learning process is decisively influenced by the ideological values and worldview of the strategist.⁷¹ It is the influence of this worldview, what Alexander George or Edward Luttwak call an “operational code,” that allows for the emergence of a coherent and consistent pattern of behavior over time even in the absence of a grand strategy. Summarizing the extensive body of literature on cognitive theories of learning, historian and former NSC official Will Inboden recently noted how “in the mind of the policymaker, such values provide a convenient cognitive filter through which to assess events and a blueprint to help determine how to respond.” The implicit values embedded in a strategist’s worldview not only help him or her understand “how the world supposedly works” but also serve as a basis for “normative judgments about how the world should work.”⁷² This idea is supported by recent political science studies of American grand strategy: book-length studies by Christopher Layne, Colin Dueck, and Henry Nau each confirm in different ways the significant role of ideas and values in shaping the grand strategic responses of US leaders at key historical turning points in the external security environment.⁷³

Interestingly, however, the security studies literature is much more skeptical than the business literature about the wisdom of decision-making based on lessons learned from recent experience, particularly when values or ideology clearly impact these lessons. Robert Jervis’s foundational study *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics* highlighted a series of problems with relying on analogies and similar heuristics, including biased judgments colored by one’s ideological or political preferences, the overvaluing of personal or salient experiences as opposed to less familiar but more appropriate analogies, and stubborn cognitive resistance to changing one’s mind about a policy or strategy in light of contradictory evidence.⁷⁴ The Emergent Strategy model’s expectation that a successful strategy can nevertheless form despite such problems, should it be supported by the historical evidence, would therefore represent a counterintuitive contribution to the scholarly understanding of strategic success.

Lastly, unlike their counterparts in the business world, how Washington leaders “learn and adapt” in the making of American strategy is also influenced by the domestic political calculations and the perceived constraints placed on them by Congress and by public opinion. Strategists shift course both in reaction to the feedback received from the international system and in reaction to the dynamics of domestic politics and the preferences of their own political party, as Peter Trubowitz’s study has persuasively demonstrated.⁷⁵ For most of the leading scholars of Grand Strategy, as exemplified in recent works by Layne and Posen,

the influence of domestic politics is detrimental to the formation of successful strategy. The pressures of domestic politics, it is suggested in the arguments of these scholars, distract leaders from following a grand strategic design aimed at securing “the national interest” in a competitive international system.⁷⁶ Similar to the literature on the leaders’ ability to learn the right lessons from their actions, national security scholars thus usually deplore the influence of domestic politics in the conduct of US grand strategy: “politics should stop at the water’s edge,” as the old Washington adage goes, and only a handful of scholars highlighted a potentially positive impact of domestic politics on US grand strategy.⁷⁷ Therefore, the Emergent Strategy model’s expectation of success despite the inescapable influence of domestic politics in an ongoing process of strategic adjustment represents another key difference between the two paradigms.

When it comes to the implications of this framework for policymakers, the proponents of Emergent Strategy challenge some of the core recommendations of the Grand Strategy school. In the view of the latter group of scholars, policymakers should engage in a deliberate strategic planning process aimed at analyzing various strategic options; they should set priorities by making trade-offs and then design a realistic plan to achieve their long-term goals by matching ends, ways, and means. However, instead of focusing on an overarching long-term goal, business theorist Richard Rumelt argues, *short-term objectives* should be prioritized: “The proximate objective is guided by forecasts of the future, but the more uncertain the future, the more its essential logic is that of ‘taking a strong position and creating options’, not looking far ahead.”⁷⁸ Similarly, matching existing resources with long-term ends is almost impossible to follow in a more uncertain environment, where forecasts of one’s future resources are unreliable. Instead, the more successful resource allocation strategy involves *hedging* one’s options with multiple “bets” on the future, choosing the most *adaptable investments*, and relying on *emergent learning* to make the right choices down the road.⁷⁹ Emergent Strategy proponents do not deny the value of strategic planning reviews; such exercises have some important virtues, including thinking through policy options and weeding out bad ones, testing assumptions, flushing out different scenarios, and sorting out logistical details. However, designing a long-term Grand Strategy framework is not usually one of these virtues, according to the Emergent Strategy school.

HONDA MOTORCYCLES

A few real-world examples can illustrate the concept of Emergent Strategy more vividly. One of the classical “design vs. emergence” case studies in the busi-

ness strategy literature is Honda's strategy for entering the American motorcycle market.⁸⁰ The success of Honda's penetration of this market was initially regarded as the result of a deliberately planned strategy, but later scholarship based on in-depth interviews with Honda's executives showed that the successful strategy in fact had little to do with any initial planning and much more to do with adaptation, learning, and a bit of good fortune. The first account of Honda's strategy, presented by adherents of the design model, contended that the Japanese must have had a carefully thought-out strategy to enter the lower end of the motorcycle market with their 50cc Supercubs due to the cost advantages given by their large domestic production base for this model. Given that Honda achieved great success in this market segment in the United States, the design model adherents simply assumed that they had followed a deliberate strategy to reach this result. However, the story later told by Honda executives was quite different.

Mr. Honda, the founder of the company, planned to focus on the bigger bikes (250cc and 305cc) to penetrate the American market because "the shape of the handlebar on these larger machines looked like the eyebrow of Buddha," something he regarded as a strong selling point given the reputation of American bikers. As for careful financial plans regarding targets for market share, breakeven points, and other elements of deliberate planning, one Honda executive frankly admitted that "we did not discuss profits or deadlines for breaking even . . . We had no strategy other than the idea of seeing if we can sell something in the United States."⁸¹ The bigger bikes Honda pushed in the American market sold a small number of units, but these soon began to break down due to being driven longer and faster in the United States than they had been in Japan. The outlook seemed dire, and as one representative put it, they felt that "disaster struck."

Even as sales of bigger bikes lagged expectations, however, something unexpected happened that eventually turned the situation around and led to a strategy shift and Honda's remarkable success. Given what they knew about the tastes of the "heavily macho" US market, Honda representatives did not even attempt to sell their small 50cc Supercubs for fear of harming the image of their brand. However, Honda employees used them to ride around Los Angeles to run errands. A buyer from Sears approached the Honda representatives and insisted that Supercubs would sell at his store. After some debate, Honda began distributing the Supercubs as well and soon realized that they could sell these small bikes much better through sporting goods stores than traditional motorcycle dealers.

At this point, a new strategy emerged for Honda's penetration of the American motorcycle market. Rather than focus exclusively on the large 250cc and 305cc

segments of the market, it channeled some of its resources to the Supercubs 50cc. Thus, the company moved from a strategy predicated on the sale of big bikes to a balanced strategy across the three categories. As the sales of large bikes remained mediocre, the sales of Honda Supercubs skyrocketed, fueled partly by the famous marketing slogan “You Meet the Nicest People on a Honda.” Even the adoption of this slogan had an interesting unplanned twist: it originated as the term project of a UCLA undergraduate student, was later purchased by an advertising agency, and finally was pitched to Honda. Despite concerns about antagonizing the more traditional “black leather” bikers, the local US sales manager convinced his superiors back in Japan to adopt this softer image. This is another example of specific initiatives, rather than top-down plans, leading to the emergence of a strategy.

The end result was a remarkable success: in four years, nearly one out of two motorcycles sold in the United States was a Honda. Business theorist Richard Pascale, the author of the study detailing this emergent success, described it as a tale of “miscalculation, serendipity, and organizational learning.” Even though the initial planned strategy did not succeed, Honda’s flexibility and learning capacity allowed the company to adapt and take advantage of new opportunities, eventually leading to strategic success in a different market segment than the one it had planned for.

INTEL’S TURN TO MICROPROCESSORS

A second famous example of emergent business strategy formation is Intel’s historic shift from producing memory chips to its modern focus on microprocessors. Rather than being a deliberate change in strategy planned by headquarters, this shift was the result of “a host of decentralized decisions taken at divisional and plant level that were subsequently acknowledged by top management and transformed into strategy.”⁸² In short, the local plant managers needed to meet profit benchmarks, and they began shifting the focus of their product line from memory chips to the more profitable microprocessors. Slowly but surely, Intel became more and more involved in making microprocessors rather than traditional memory chips. The strategic planners in the corporate headquarters, as they began noticing this emerging trend and growing shift in their mix of products, eventually decided that the new strategic direction of Intel should indeed be toward microprocessors. Therefore, they adopted this view as official strategy and started to formally implement it throughout the organization. This important shift in strategy emerged, and was eventually institutionalized, in the absence of any deliberate design calling for it.⁸³

The examples of Honda and Intel are not outliers. Drew Erdmann recently showed how the empirical record accumulated in the business literature over several decades offers significant (but not overwhelming) support to the emergent process school of strategy formation.⁸⁴ Several studies suggest that while most intended strategies end up unrealized, a large number of successful strategies emerge from a complex set of interactions between actors at different levels within the firm; they form without being formulated in a written plan by corporate management. A McKinsey survey of corporate executives found that “less than one quarter [of the executives surveyed] report that their companies make important strategic decisions within the formal strategic planning process,” and two-thirds of the founders of successful new ventures relied on learning and adaptation rather than on a detailed strategic plan written beforehand.⁸⁵

STRATEGY IN ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY

The concept of an emergent strategy is likely to appeal at an intuitive level to students of national security strategy as well. For example, studies of the Roman Empire’s strategy conducted by Edward Luttwak and Jim Lacey showed the guiding influence of a successful strategy characterized by learning and adaptation. Lacey contends, in language reminiscent of Mintzberg’s definition of emergent strategy, that “a historian can glean sufficient information from various histories and the archeological record to demonstrate that Rome possessed and adhered to an overall strategy, even if never articulated as such.”⁸⁶ The main strategic goal for the Romans involved securing the frontiers of the core (“tax producing”) provinces against both external enemies and revolt. The ways to achieve this overarching goal evolved throughout the centuries, requiring the emperors to “adapt their strategies and methods, as they confronted a dynamic and changing threat.”⁸⁷ The changes in the threat environment led the Roman rulers to adapt their ways, but just as importantly their enduring vision of their role in the world shaped the ways in which they responded to these changes. The Romans indeed had an “ingrained national consciousness” guiding their strategy, which allowed for the emergence of a coherent and consistent long-term strategy.⁸⁸ Most importantly, this emergent strategy served Rome exceptionally well: historian Paul Kennedy referred to it as “perhaps the most successful (if subconsciously) sustained ‘grand’ strategy in history.”⁸⁹

Luttwak’s more recent history of Byzantine strategy also fits the emergent process view of strategy. The Byzantines “had no central planning staff to produce documents in the modern manner,” but they nevertheless had a strategy, “even

if it was never stated explicitly.”⁹⁰ The historical record showed that they applied the same set of strategic principles “so repetitively that one may even extract a Byzantine operational code.” In the language of the emergence model, their successful coherent and consistent pattern of behavior amounted to an emergent strategy. The key for the success of the Byzantines was their extraordinary ability to “learn from experience,” Luttwak concludes, thus further confirming the similarities between his historical narrative and the way Emergent Strategy scholars describe the path to strategic success.⁹¹

In the introduction to a recent volume examining the strategic experiences of several different great powers, Williamson Murray takes issue with the view that successful strategy requires “an enunciated set of goals and principles to which statesmen and military leaders adhere in a consistent fashion.”⁹² Murray’s co-editor, Richard Sinnreich, expresses similar doubts about the Grand Strategy paradigm in the concluding essay of the book: “Readers who have navigated all seven of the cases examined in the preceding pages might be pardoned for doubting whether grand strategy, in the sense of the consistent execution over time of a preconceived strategic design, is even possible, let alone likely. Certainly none of those cases reveal such a pattern.”⁹³ Even for a famous master strategist such as Otto von Bismarck, the role of adaptation seemed to be more important in the formation of his strategy than that of his designs: “To the extent that one can apply such an anachronistic concept to him, grand strategy was an ongoing process of adaptation to shifting circumstances instead of a formula or handful of trite maxims.”⁹⁴ This supports a previous study of Bismarck’s statecraft, which credited his success to his uncanny adaptability rather than to his foresight or his designs: “Bismarck’s great genius . . . lay not in his adherence to a systematic program or plan but in his expert navigation of uncertain events through intuition and broad experience.”⁹⁵ Lastly, other case studies of the strategies of Abraham Lincoln and of the British Empire’s fight against Napoleon in that volume similarly emphasized the roles of learning, adaptation, and contingency in their ultimate successes.⁹⁶

As the works referenced above illustrate, the idea that strategies can sometimes evolve in an emergent fashion has been present at least implicitly in the literature on strategy and grand strategy. However, unlike the business world where the “design vs. emergence” debate raged for years, no work in the field of political science so far explicitly put forward and tested an Emergent Strategy process model of strategy formation as an alternative to the Grand Strategy paradigm as an explanation of *successful* strategizing.

Table 1 Summary of the two models

	Grand Strategy	Emergent Strategy
<i>Hypotheses</i>	1. The more a president's foreign policy is shaped by a long-term coherent grand strategy, the more successful it will be. 2. The path to strategic success starts with strategic planning and analysis, followed by the flexible implementation of a designed course of action.	1. The more a president's foreign policy is shaped by emergent learning and short-term adaptation, the more successful it will be. 2. Incremental policy decisions and early responses to crisis situations have a larger influence on the ultimate success of strategic outcomes than farsighted designs.
<i>Policy recommendations</i>	1. Decide on long-term objectives through strategic planning analysis of internal resources and external conditions, articulate a long-term grand strategy to achieve them, and use this strategy to shape your foreign policy decisions. 2. Remain flexible regarding the means but not the ends.	1. Focus on crisis response, emergent learning from your actions, and adaptation in the short term, as opposed to the pursuit of a long-term grand design. 2. Remain flexible regarding <i>both</i> your ends and the means to achieve them.

In summary, for the Emergent Strategy model, successful strategic outcomes are generally associated with learning and adaptation, not advanced planning and implementation. Government officials engage in an active process of learning from recent experience when making strategic decisions, particularly by the use of analogies. The lessons they learn from their recent experiences are filtered through their values, worldview, and ideological vision for the country. Formal strategic planning reviews rarely determine the future strategic course of the nation: the plans coming out of such planning exercises have at best a marginal impact on future decisions. Incremental policy decisions, early responses to crisis situations, and specific initiatives have a larger impact on long-term strategic success than farsighted designs. In the Emergent Strategy model, moreover, there is a continuous interaction between formulation and implementation of a strategy, to the point where the two become almost indistinguishable: a constant readjustment of means, ways, and of the ends themselves characterizes the strat-

egy-making process. Table 1 summarizes the competing expectations and policy recommendations of the two models.

Sources and Methods: Process-Tracing Methodology, Data, and Case Study Selection

I code the foreign policy decisions to be analyzed as primarily a product of grand strategy or emergent strategy according to the following scheme:

- If the policy follows from a grand strategic plan or is congruent with the approach laid out in the plan, if a plan is invoked or used in justifying the decision, or if it could be otherwise reasonably inferred that the written plan, strategy, strategic planning exercise, or review leading to the respective plan shaped the decision in a substantive way, then the decision will be coded as part of a grand strategy.
- If the policy was improvised or it came about incrementally in response to a crisis, if it was made based on perceived lessons learned from recent experience filtered through the policymaker's ideological values and political interests, or if the action preceded rather than followed the formulation of a strategic plan (i.e., the difference between "formulation" and "implementation" was blurred), then the decision will be coded as emergent.

These criteria are admittedly not water-tight, but they are reasonable enough to achieve the goal of distinguishing between a Grand Strategy overall approach and an Emergent Strategy one, particularly given that I examine multiple elements of a strategy rather than a single aspect, thus increasing the number of in-case observations. My methodological approach is similar to other qualitative research works on American grand strategy, such as those distinguishing grand strategies as "hegemonic" vs. "liberal internationalists," "idealist" vs. "realist," or "offensive realist" vs. "defensive realist," where ideal-type categories are imposed for the purposes of theoretical clarity on more muddled real world strategies that often combined elements belonging to more than one category.

Similar to the majority of the literature on US grand strategy, this study follows the case-study methodological approach in accordance with the guidelines for "structured, focused comparison" set by Alexander George and George Bennett in their seminal work *Case Studies and Theory Development*.⁹⁷ Each case study begins with an introduction to the strategic environment faced by the American

policymakers, followed by a second section presenting the grand strategic designs formulated to address the threats and opportunities present in the international system. The third part of the case study analyzes selected major foreign policy decisions and actions through the competing lenses of the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy frameworks and offers a discussion of the short-term and long-term success of the administration's strategic initiatives by using counterfactual analysis to compare the actual results with those of possible alternative choices. For each policy decision or element of the administration's strategy, I discuss how it supports or contradicts the competing expectations of the two models, both in the short run and in the long run.

Given that this project deals with the question of how strategy is made, a *process-tracing* qualitative approach is the most appropriate technique for exploring the relative explanatory power of each of the models.⁹⁸ The case studies were selected based on their importance to the development of American strategy from the end of World War II until 2008. The large number of case studies, seven chapters covering seven presidential administrations, should provide enough variance in the historical material on both the design/emergence dimension and the success/failure one to fairly assess both models. Some presidents discussed, like Truman, Richard Nixon, and Dwight D. Eisenhower, have earned a reputation among students of strategy as grand designers, albeit not always successful ones; others, like George H. W. Bush or Bill Clinton, have been often criticized for "lacking strategic vision" and "making it up as they went along." Moreover, there is also additional variance provided by different observations within each case: certain presidents had both planned and emergent strategic initiatives, and some of these were more successful than others, thus allowing for further comparative analysis of the models.

My book does not address the presidencies of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter. My selection of cases aimed to examine critical moments of strategic change when an administration, either in a designed or emergent manner, significantly altered the course of US strategy in a positive or negative way. The four presidents not examined here, in my judgment, do not fit this bill. Kennedy's tenure was too short to properly judge the impact of his main attempted strategic innovation, the Flexible Response doctrine. Johnson's tenure was so thoroughly dominated by the fighting of the Vietnam War that he did not have much time, interest, or political capital to focus on major shifts in global strategy. In terms of grand strategy, the Ford administration was mostly a continuation of the Nixon administration. Lastly, the Carter administration did

not significantly alter Containment, despite an initial effort to do so, and thus does not rise to the level of a critical shift in US strategy. Therefore, the four missing presidencies are not very theoretically relevant for the grand strategy vs. emergent strategy comparison, in my judgment, and as such their absence does not bias my conclusions one way or the other.

The main data for this study come from a number of US government “national strategy” publications. Such documents represent the core sources for the grand strategy designs of an administration. In order to provide the needed context for understanding such documents and their impact, I examine the historical record composed of the internal memos and transcripts surrounding the policy debates selected in each case study, speeches and public addresses, biographies and memoirs of the main actors, the historical scholarship, and journalistic behind-the-scenes accounts. In addition, for the post-Cold War presidencies (George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush), I complemented the existing scholarly record with original archival research at the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas, Texas, as well as with insights derived from conducting extensive research interviews with former mid-level and senior US government officials involved in strategic planning and decision-making during that time. The appendix presents a full list of the major American grand strategy documents produced by each administration and a list of the former policymakers interviewed for this study.

One of the challenges in dealing with qualitative data is inferring whether the statements made by policymakers represent accurate depictions of their beliefs or were instead made for public consumption. The same goes for some of the publicly available documents. Another challenge is that in their memoirs, the main actors might recollect details imperfectly, and of course they might attempt to present their actions in a way that makes them seem farsighted and acting with a grand strategic plan in mind. This should make it more difficult to find support for the Emergent Strategy approach. In order to address the difficulties inherent in “process-tracing” qualitative methodology, I have applied Deborah Larson’s method of “indirect inference.”⁹⁹ In short, I tried to ascertain the truthfulness and significance of statements, and what purpose they might have had, by looking at who said what to whom under what circumstances. One type of fairly weak evidence in support of the Grand Strategy school would be if the designers claimed that their designs were successfully implemented. Conversely, one type of fairly strong evidence in support of the Emergent school would be if the Washington designers themselves claimed their own decision-making did not follow

a strategic planning approach. This is so because the Grand Strategy model has an excellent reputation in the policymaking community, and presumably policymakers would prefer to be known (or remembered) as skilled grand strategists.

How to Analyze Strategic Success

There are no widely accepted scholarly standards for determining what should be considered *success* or *failure* when it comes to judging the strategic performance of an administration. As Edelstein and Krebs recently argued in *Foreign Affairs*, one of the weaknesses of the grand strategy literature is that “there are no clear metrics to assess the costs and benefits of a particular course of action, even in retrospect. Strategic outcomes that appear poorly calculated to one analyst may seem sensible to another with different goals and ambitions.”¹⁰⁰ Such a lack of consensus on common criteria for success, of course, does not prevent historians, political scientists, and think tank policy analysts from judging the foreign policy records of past presidents and from assigning blame for poor strategic outcomes or offering praises for positive developments. Nor should it. Policy analysis would be impossible if one could not separate objective judgments on success and failure from one’s own personal policy preferences or ideological biases. Judging the success of various elements of a strategy and of the decisions and policies shaped by it will always be contested to some extent, but that does not mean that a preponderance of evidence does not point one way or the other in the cases I examine in this book.

Even leaving aside the issue of political or partisan bias, there remains one major obstacle to judging strategic performance. In dealing with complex and multi-causal events, it is impossible to tell with great certainty whether a successful outcome was directly caused by good strategy as opposed to other factors such as good fortune or an inept enemy. Given this lack of clear connection between actions and results, scholars employ other methods to judge an administration’s performance. Depending on whether they belong to the “strategic studies” or the “security studies” side of the epistemological and disciplinary division between scholars of national security strategy, analysts tend to judge strategic success in two different ways.¹⁰¹

For many grand strategy historians, such as Gaddis or Brands, as well as for many military professionals, determining competent strategy requires analyzing first and foremost whether the administrations properly matched the available means with the objectives they pursued. A fair assessment, Gaddis argues, should

evaluate the strategy “according to the goals its architects set for it, not by some external frame of reference.”¹⁰² Hence, by this standard, what kind of objectives leaders choose is not nearly as important as whether they achieve those particular objectives or not using the means at their disposal. Such a view is unhelpful for analyzing strategic performance in foreign policy because it needlessly shifts the conversation away from judging whether the overall national interest has been advanced. This approach misses the fact that grand strategy is not merely an extension of strategy, as the term is usually understood in Clausewitzian terms, to a higher level; the grand strategic level is not simply a superior level of analysis to the strategic level in the way that the strategic level is to the operational level or the operational is to the tactical level. Good military strategy is indeed best measured by analyzing whether strategists made effective use of *military means* to achieve a set of *predetermined political goals*; however, good *grand strategic performance* cannot be usefully assessed simply by adding other nonmilitary tools of national power (economic, diplomatic, informational) to the means side of the equation and expanding “political goals” to an amorphous concept of “long-term national interests.”¹⁰³ Unlike in wartime, where the challenge for military strategists is to design and implement ways to accomplish *predetermined objectives* assigned to them by their civilian superiors, in matters of foreign policy strategy *the choice of the objectives to be pursued*, such as determining what are America’s goals in the world and what are the threats to those goals, influences the overall success of the endeavor at least as much as the ways and means selected to pursue them.

To take one illustrative example, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt is rightfully remembered as one of the country’s greatest strategists because of choices he made regarding US global goals in the 1940s. He advocated for America to join the war against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, even at a time when the United States did not have the military power readily available to send to Europe and Asia. The *means* in that situation were increased only after the strategic choice had already been made. The alternative strategic choice proposed by FDR’s isolationist opponents, neutralism, would have actually been much easier to implement because it only required limited means. If one focused primarily on matching existing means to ends, that option would have been very tempting but of course would have likely led to a catastrophic failure for the United States. Thus, Roosevelt’s long-term strategic success came from his bold choice of the strategic end of defeating Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, not from his ability to choose an objective best suited to the limited means at his disposal.¹⁰⁴

Political scientists in the security studies community focus much more on the

substance of the grand strategy choices and less on the relation between means and ends. However, scholars are deeply divided politically in terms of what they consider a successful strategic outcome, leading to heated but not very productive debates such as the recent one between proponents of “restraint / offshore balancing” (Posen, Mearsheimer, and Walt), who basically judge US performance over the past decades to have been extraordinarily flawed, against other scholars favoring “deep engagement / global leadership” (Wolhforth, Brooks, Ikenberry, Brands, and Feaver), who contend that America’s strategic record was rather successful and certainly better than if the alternative framework proposed by offshore balancers had been in place.¹⁰⁵ The first group emphasizes mostly the costs of the grand strategy, while the second group emphasizes mostly its benefits. The disagreement between the two camps boils down to whether Washington would be able to secure roughly the same benefits of a relatively safe and prosperous America without incurring the resource commitments needed to maintain a US-led liberal world order. Essentially, however, both camps associate success with the pursuit of a grand strategy, even as they strongly differ as to which one to choose.

In this book, I attempt to avoid these shortcomings by relying on the following principles for judging strategic performance and for attributing foreign policy successes and failures to Grand Strategy or to Emergent Strategy.

First, I do not assume that the designed grand strategy of an administration necessarily shaped the foreign policy decisions adopted in later years, and therefore I do not assess strategic performance primarily based on whether government leaders were successful or not in implementing their initial strategic plans and priorities. The perennial debates on whether a strategy was poorly conceived in theory or poorly implemented in practice are intellectually stimulating, but this is not the best way to judge strategic success. In the theoretical framing proposed in this book, success (or failure) could come from either grand strategy or emergent strategy, and therefore an administration’s successes and failures must be judged primarily by analyzing the results of its actions, not its plans. Therefore, I focus on a small number of key actual policies and decisions that influenced the administration’s foreign policy legacy, and then I connect the success or failure of these decisions with the type of process that shaped the decision-making in each case. My assessment method is centered on analyzing multiple elements of a foreign policy in the case studies and on connecting the two dimensions (*emergent strategy* vs. *grand strategy* and *success* vs. *failure*) at several intermediate steps to determine whether the emergent parts of the strategy

are more successful than the designed parts. Thus, I do not limit myself to simply making an overall judgment on the strategy as a whole but use multiple observations to test the competing models more thoroughly. Even if reasonable observers can still disagree with the coding of one or another of the mini-cases, this method at least preempts the criticism that the book's overall argument hinges on just one or two subjective judgments.

Second, for each strategic choice, I rely on counterfactual reasoning to compare the costs and benefits of a decision relative to other plausible alternatives available at the time.¹⁰⁶ It is a common mistake in foreign policy analysis, albeit an understandable one, to judge a policy mainly based on a close evaluation of its own costs and benefits, without comparing it as carefully with the likely costs and benefits of the alternative strategic paths that could have been chosen otherwise. Even if inescapable in judging strategic choices, counterfactual reasoning is of course subjective to some extent as well. I will use a standard of the "preponderance of evidence" for determining the success or failure of each decision while nevertheless acknowledging that other scholars could regard some ideologically controversial decisions differently.

Third and last, I separate short-term goals from long-term goals and analyze each of them separately, thus allowing for the possibility that one model might be better suited for short-term goals and the other for long-term ones. After all, one counterargument directed against an Emergent Strategy approach is that it leads policymakers to focus excessively on short-term goals, thus harming the nation's long-term interests. Grand Strategy, on the other hand, is said to discipline leaders' thinking and help them stay focused on the long-term goals. I test these competing hypotheses in my chapters by discussing the connections between the emergent/design dynamic and the fulfillment of both short-term and long-term goals.

George Kennan, Containment, and the Beginning of the Cold War

At the end of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union entered into a prolonged period of ideological and geopolitical conflict that came to be labeled the Cold War. The strategic alliance made in World War II in order to counter Nazi Germany was short-lived, and powerful disagreements about the future of Europe and Asia, as well as about the shape of the international security system, came to dominate the relations between Washington and Moscow as soon as it became clear that the Axis Powers would be defeated. Despite initial attempts to continue the strategic approach of its predecessor, the Truman administration soon moved away from President Roosevelt's postwar designs for the "four policemen of the world" (the United States, the USSR, China, and Great Britain) acting in concert to maintain international peace and stability.¹ In the early years of the Cold War, countering the threat of Soviet and Communist expansionism became the overall objective of American foreign policy and national security.

Containment, as the new approach was called, provided an overarching goal, but American and Western policymakers nevertheless fought vigorously over the specific elements of the strategy and over the specific policies and actions needed to counter the Soviets and their Communist allies. Thus, defining the formative elements of the new strategy dominated national security policy-making during the Truman administration. The vast scholarship on the origins of the Cold War offers heated debates on a number of questions, but a fairly widespread planning narrative consistent with the Grand Strategy model dominates our theoretical understanding of how Containment came about.² As shown in the previous chapter, this narrative contends that George Kennan, a career Foreign Service Officer and the first director of the Policy Planning Office, formulated the Containment grand strategy in general terms, and then specific policies evolved from his framework.³ Kennan's reputation soared early in the Cold War when his famous "Long Telegram," and subsequent publication in *Foreign Affairs* of the "X Article," were widely portrayed in the media as articulating the US government's

new Containment strategy toward the Soviet Union.⁴ Sixty years later, and with the successful and peaceful ending of the Cold War in a way arguably predicted by Kennan's plans, this planning narrative remains entrenched in many academic and policy-making circles. For example, in the 2000s, a bipartisan effort, the Princeton Project on National Security, was set up with the specific goal to "write a collective 'Article X'" to shape US strategy as Kennan's grand design had done in the Cold War era. The two distinguished co-chairs of the project, John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, remarked how "throughout the Cold War, U.S. policy was grounded in the doctrine of containment, first articulated by George Kennan, which aimed to prevent the spread of communism."⁵ Therefore, Kennan's plans and designs are the best place to start analyzing the fit between the Grand Strategy model and the formation of Containment as America's successful Cold War strategy.

Kennan's Grand Strategy of Containment

The contours of the grand strategy of Containment in Kennan's conception can be fleshed out from an examination of the "Long Telegram," the "X Article," and some of the papers and reports he produced as the first head of the Office of Policy Planning in the State Department.⁶

The first major challenge for the Truman administration's early Cold War foreign policy was diagnosing the nature of the threat. What exactly needed to be "contained"? For Kennan, the answer was Russian/Soviet expansionism, *not* international Communism. Such expansionism, he explained in the "Long Telegram," was partly driven by "basic inner-Russian necessities which existed before the war and exist today."⁷ The totalitarian Stalinist regime sought a state of permanent conflict with the outside world to justify its repression of its own people. Here, Kennan introduced the word "containment" to Washington's strategic vocabulary: "In these circumstances it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."⁸

Kennan's grand strategy emphasized the psychological aspect of the Communist threat rather than a military dimension. The possibility of Soviet advances via psychological means worried him more than their ability to use force: "it is the shadows rather than the substance of things that move the hearts, and sway the deeds, of statesmen."⁹ In practical terms, the above beliefs led Kennan to oppose what he later deplored as the "militarization" of his approach and insist

on economic and political support for US allies rather than direct US military assistance or protection.

In Kennan's view, the Communist ideology was more of a tool used by Kremlin leaders to further their goals rather than an overarching force guiding their behavior: "Ideology is a product and not a determinant of social and political reality."¹⁰ He therefore argued against offering assistance to anti-Communist forces worldwide; instead, he wanted to focus American efforts only on those directly connected to the Soviet Union and the European balance of power, and to Japan.¹¹ Otherwise, he said, "everybody in the world" would start asking for US help claiming that they were facing Communist insurgents. To further highlight his clear distinction between Soviet and international Communism, Kennan went on to say, "We are not necessarily against the expansion of Communism, and certainly not always to the same degree in every area."¹²

The grand strategic context of Kennan's plans was not provided solely by the nature of the Soviet threat but also by Kennan's own understanding of the international system and his view of the proper US role in the world. Kennan designed a grand strategy based on the principle of *balance of power*. As he put it in a Policy Planning Study in 1947, "All in all, our policy must be directed toward restoring a balance of power in Europe and Asia." He thought that the Soviets could pose a dangerous threat to the United States only insofar as they could upend this balance by taking over another key region of the world. These five key regions were the United States, the United Kingdom, the Rhine valley, the USSR, and Japan. "The main task of Containment," therefore, was "seeing to it that none of the remaining ones fell under such [Soviet] control."¹³

If the US goal was to maintain a balance of power in Europe and Asia, then the US policy should move towards encouraging strong, independent power centers in these regions capable of resisting Soviet encroachment. Kennan envisioned the emergence of a reunited, independent Germany and of a strong Japan that would be able to provide for their own defenses, without the need for American military support. He therefore argued that both US and Soviet troops should eventually withdraw from their forward-deployed positions facing each other in the middle of Europe: "Any world balance of power means first and foremost a balance on the European land mass. That balance is unthinkable as long as Germany and Japan remain power vacuums."¹⁴ Kennan thus opposed a long-term American forward-deployed military presence in Europe. As he recalled in his memoirs, he considered that a goal of US grand strategy should be "to get out as soon as possible of the position of abnormal political-military responsibility in Western Europe which the

war had forced upon us. I had no confidence that a status quo dependent on so wide an American commitment could be an enduring one.”¹⁵

Kennan’s planning documents thus disputed the wisdom of a long-term US military commitment to bear the burden of leading an alliance such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In PPS/13, a report titled “Résumé on the World Situation” and dated November 6, 1947, Kennan argued that “our best answer . . . is to strengthen in every way local forces of resistance, and persuade others to bear a greater part of the burden of opposing communism . . . The present ‘bi-polarity’ will, in the long run, be beyond our resources.”¹⁶ Similarly, Kennan argued that US policy should be directed “toward the eventual peaceful withdrawal of both the United States and USSR from the heart of Europe, and accordingly toward the encouragement of the growth of a third force which can absorb and take over the territory between the two.”¹⁷ The addition to NATO of most countries already part of the Marshall Plan, on the contrary, would mean “a final militarization of the present dividing line through Europe.”¹⁸

As John Gaddis describes it in the most authoritative historical study of US Cold War national security policy, *Strategies of Containment*, Kennan’s grand design envisioned three stages of US-Soviet relations in the longer term.¹⁹ First, it called for a restoration of the balance of power; this could be thought of as the first stage of American grand strategy following World War II. Second, the United States should exploit the tensions between Moscow and the international Communist movement. And in the third stage, America should work to bring about over time a change in Soviet external behavior leading to a negotiated settlement between the United States and the USSR. Lastly, taking an even more long-term perspective, Kennan famously wrote that the “United States has it in its power to increase enormously the strains under which Soviet policy must operate, to force upon the Kremlin a far greater degree of moderation and circumspection than it has had to observe in recent years, and in this way to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the breakup or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power.”²⁰ This particular quotation, which appears toward the end of the “X Article,” appears prophetic in the aftermath of the Soviet Union’s demise, and Kennan deserves much of the credit he now receives for laying out the possibility of such an outcome from the very beginning of the Cold War. However, such prescience should not be confused with evidence that his plans and designs necessarily served to bring about this successful long-term result. To analyze this Grand Strategy hypothesis, and compare its explanatory power with an Emergent Strategy alternative, this chapter examines three mini-cases of three impactful

policy decisions of this formative period of Cold War strategy: the Truman Doctrine, the adoption of the Marshall Plan, and the formation of NATO.

Iran, Greece, Turkey, and the Truman Doctrine

The roots of the “Truman Doctrine”—that is, the US strategic commitment to “support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures”²¹—lie in the Truman administration’s policy of “patience and firmness” that guided the US response to a series of conflicts of interests between Washington and Moscow throughout 1946 and 1947.²² This section analyzes the formation of this key component of the early Cold War strategy by presenting the steps that led to its formation as well as by discussing the overall objectives and vision adopted by policymakers regarding the US role in the world vis-à-vis the threat of Communist expansion. In order to test the competing expectations of the two models, I analyze to what extent the Truman Doctrine was a result of, or at least congruent with, Kennan’s grand designs developed around that same time, and I discuss the short- and long-term success of Truman’s early strategic commitment to support “free peoples” around the world in their fights against Communist forces.

One of Truman’s most trusted foreign policy advisers throughout his presidency, Dean Acheson, considered that “the year 1946 was for the most part a year of learning.”²³ First, there was the Iranian crisis in March of that year.²⁴ The two major dilemmas in that conflict were, first, whether the Soviet troops would fully withdraw from Iran in accordance to the schedule set in the Tehran Declaration in 1943, and, second, whether the Soviets would succeed in installing a puppet Communist government in the province of Azerbaijan or even annex it to the USSR. On both counts, the Truman administration, together with its British allies, supported the Iranian government and took a tough line against the Soviets. When the March 2 deadline passed without any Soviet withdrawals from Azerbaijan, US Secretary of State James M. Byrnes sent Moscow a strongly worded demand for an immediate Soviet withdrawal, making the release public so as to put more pressure on the Kremlin. Washington and London also offered strong backing to the Iranians in bringing the issue of Azerbaijan to the attention of the UN Security Council. Emboldened by this support, Iranian Prime Minister Ahmad Qavam sent troops to Azerbaijan to reclaim control of the province. When the Soviet army finally withdrew, the local Communists were quickly neutralized as a potential threat.

The strong reaction of the Truman administration to Soviet pressures on Iran, and the subsequent retreat of the Soviets from the country, represented for many contemporary observers “a turning point in American policy towards Russia,” and future historians came to regard it as an event of great significance in hardening the US stance towards the Soviet Union in future interactions.²⁵ Bruce Kuniholm, in one of the most authoritative studies of this event, summarized its impact as follows: “The crisis in Iran crystallized the Truman administration’s understanding of Soviet tactics.”²⁶ Key for the *long-term design vs. emergent learning* theoretical distinction, then undersecretary of state Dean Acheson used Iran as a “model” for how to deal with the upcoming Greek and Turkish crises; other policymakers also used analogies, such as calling Grecian Macedonia another “Azerbaijan area.”²⁷ This process of reasoning by the use of analogies, and using lessons learned from one crisis to develop a response to the next crises, supports the emergent view of strategy-making.

The Emergent Strategy model, with its focus on incremental improvisations, also explains the road from the decisions on Greece and Turkey to the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947. Soon after the Soviets had withdrawn from Iran, Washington grew concerned about Communist influence spreading in two other countries of strategic importance, Greece and Turkey. These crises were precipitated by the British inability to continue to offer financial and military assistance to either of these two countries. In Greece, the local Communist insurgents threatened the stability of the pro-Western ruling government, and, as former State Department official Joseph Jones recollects in one of the classical accounts of the formation of the Truman Doctrine, “according to unanimous reports streaming into the Department, [the Greek government] was in February 1947 within weeks of an economic, moral, and military collapse.”²⁸ The Communist governments in neighboring Bulgaria, Albania, and Yugoslavia were allegedly training and supplying the Communist guerillas, but the Soviets did not appear to be directly involved. Fearing imminent collapse and a takeover by Communist guerillas, the US ambassador in Athens, Lincoln MacVeagh, requested both economic and military aid on February 20. Acheson, Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall, and ultimately President Truman all agreed to provide such aid as soon as possible.²⁹ In his memoirs, President Truman recalls this episode as a key decision in the strategic context of the Cold War: “If we were to turn our back on the world, areas such as Greece, weakened and divided as a result of the war, would fall into the Soviet orbit without much effort on the part of the Russians. The success of Russia in such areas and our avowed lack of interest would

lead to the growth of domestic Communist parties in such European countries as France and Italy, where they were already significant threats.”³⁰

It is theoretically important to emphasize here that the Greek Communists were mostly supported by Tito’s Yugoslavia, not by the Soviet Union. For Truman, the distinction between countering the spread of Communism versus the influence of the Soviet Union was far less important than in Kennan’s thinking.

The Turkish government, in turn, was also facing pressures on its borders from Communist neighbors, the Soviet republics of Armenia and Georgia. Even more ominously from an American perspective, the Soviets insisted on a naval base in the Dardanelles Strait, a geostrategic position of great significance. As with the Greek crisis, the Turkish government, having just lost the support of the British, was in need of a new external ally to resist Soviet pressure. And similar to its actions to support Athens, the Truman administration readily agreed to help Ankara.³¹ Seeing these Soviet pressures as more than merely a geopolitical maneuver, Washington officials feared a Soviet invasion of Turkey and even began designing possible military responses against such a move. Based on recently declassified documents, historian Eduard Mark conducted a detailed study of the “war scare” brought by the Turkish crisis of 1946 and showed its importance in changing the administration’s view of USSR’s intentions: “At the beginning of 1946 there was no expectation of war with Russia, and no plans for fighting that country existed. By the end of the year, policymakers had accepted the postulate that war was always possible as long as Moscow pursued expansionist designs, a full set of war plans was nearing completion, and American and British planners had devised a common strategy for fighting the USSR [in case of a Soviet invasion].”³² Thus, the Soviets were already beginning to be regarded as a global aggressive enemy in need of containing even before Kennan’s famous “X Article.”

As the administration had already decided to help Greece and Turkey as part of a broader effort to combat Soviet influence, Congress now had to be convinced to appropriate the necessary funds. Truman convened Congressional leaders at the White House for a meeting on this topic and invited Marshall and Acheson to brief them on the situation. Secretary Marshall explained the need to support the governments of Greece and Turkey, two countries of strategic significance, in the aftermath of British withdrawal. However, his presentation was met with significant skepticism. Congressmen asked questions such as “Isn’t this pulling British chestnuts out of the fire?” or “What are we letting ourselves in for?”³³

Acheson intervened and delivered a presentation on the global conflict with the Soviets which not only persuaded the Congressional leaders in that meet-

ing but also sketched the contours for President Truman's subsequent address to Congress and crystallized a key element of the Containment strategy that ultimately shaped Truman's approach to the Cold War. Joseph Jones's account of that meeting describes how Acheson's remarks linked the Greece and Turkey crises to the higher level of global strategy and to the ideological nature of the conflict:

Only two great powers remained in the world, Acheson continued, the United States and the Soviet Union . . . Moreover, the two great powers are divided by an unbridgeable ideological chasm. For us, democracy and individual liberty are basic; for them dictatorship and absolute conformity . . . For the United States to take steps to strengthen countries threatened with Soviet aggression or Communist subversion was not to pull British chestnuts out of the fire; it was to protect the security of the United States—it was to protect freedom itself . . . The [Soviets] aim was control of the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. From there the possibilities for penetration of South Asia and Africa were limitless.³⁴

When Harry Truman addressed Congress on March 12, 1947, he incorporated these themes in what came to be known as the Truman Doctrine: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way . . . Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far-reaching to the West as well as to the East."³⁵

This particular episode in the formation of Truman's Cold War strategy had an instant impact on the public debate, and the media proclaimed it "a historic landmark in American foreign policy . . . no less significant than the Monroe Doctrine and the decision to oppose Hitler."³⁶ In his memoirs, one State Department official recalled how "the explicit reaction to all in government, from the President down, who were concerned with the decision to aid Greece and Turkey was that a historical turning point had been reached, that the United States must now stand forth as leader of the free world in place of the flagging British and use its power directly and vigorously to strengthen free nations."³⁷

In terms of the decision-making process by which the Truman Doctrine came about, the above narrative shows an incremental, emergent process rather than a deliberate one shaped by Kennan's long-term designs or by anyone else's strategic planning. As Gaddis observed, "decisions to aid Greece and Turkey, as well as other nations threatened by the Soviet Union, had been made months before" the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947.³⁸ Moreover, in addition to the

strong response on Iran, the Truman administration throughout 1946 manifested a tough stance toward the USSR in a number of other instances: the termination of German reparations shipments, refusal to compromise on the Baruch Plan on nuclear energy, tacit approval of Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech, and Secretary Byrnes's tenacious negotiating tactics at the Paris Peace Conference.³⁹ These policies are evidence of a strategic approach emerging out of the immediate crises of 1946–1947, a strategy ultimately crystallized in Truman's speech to Congress. The Truman Doctrine generalized the commitment to aid Greece and Turkey into a commitment to resist Soviet expansionism and the spread of Communism globally. The reasons for this decision had to do with the need to persuade Congress and public opinion of the magnitude of the Soviet threat, thus confirming the importance of domestic politics in shaping foreign policy strategy, another tenet of the Emergent Strategy paradigm.

Kennan's reputation as the key architect of Containment rests largely on his well-timed introduction of the concept of *containment* in the public debate. This term crystallized in a single word the strategy that was already showing signs of emerging in the responses to the Iranian, Greek, and Turkish crises. The publication of the "X Article" in 1947 and the resulting national debate, along with the Truman Doctrine, led to the adoption in the foreign policy community of the idea of Containment as the central concept of America's Cold War strategy. Despite adopting the idea of Containment as a guiding principle, however, there were at least two important ways in which the Truman Doctrine set the parameters for a US strategy different from the one Kennan outlined in his writings.⁴⁰

First, the *balance-of-power* design proposed by Kennan played down the importance of the internal form of governance adopted by different states and of the ideological nature of the Cold War as a fight between freedom and tyranny. He was a strong critic of what he called the liberal/universalist American foreign policy tradition; such a view, Kennan complained, wrongly assumed that "men everywhere are basically like ourselves, that they are animated by substantially the same hopes and inspirations."⁴¹ This led him to oppose the freedom, democracy, and human-rights agenda that became an important part of the Containment strategy, starting with the Truman Doctrine and continuing in different ways for the rest of the Cold War. His grand designs were predicated on a nonideological calculus of power interests, without much concern for a special US role as defender of the so-called free world and as guarantor and promoter of a liberal politico-economic world order. "It is a traditional principle of this Government to refrain from interference in the internal affairs of other coun-

tries,” Kennan wrote, a statement that surely must have puzzled many leaders in the Western hemisphere who had experienced for decades a sustained level of involvement in their “internal affairs” from Washington under the aegis of the Monroe Doctrine.⁴²

If Kennan viewed the Cold War at a theoretical level in geopolitical terms, Truman and Acheson instead adopted a more idealistic view of the role that the United States should play in defending and promoting freedom and democracy around the globe. Acheson, Kennan’s boss at the time, never shied away in public speeches from espousing the very principles of universalism that Kennan disparaged so thoroughly in his writings: “We are children of freedom,” said Acheson. “We cannot be safe except in an environment of freedom . . . We believe that all people in the world are entitled to as much freedom, to develop in their own way, as we want ourselves.”⁴³ President Truman shared Acheson’s views, and it is no coincidence that his administration supported British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s now famous Fulton speech warning that “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent.”⁴⁴ Churchill went on to call for liberal democracies to stand together against the threat from Soviet expansionism, emphasized the role of liberal ideas and principles, and explicitly rejected a balance-of-power approach: “From what I have seen of our Russian friends and Allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness. For that reason the old doctrine of a balance of power is unsound. We cannot afford, if we can help it, to work on narrow margins, offering temptations to a trial of strength.”⁴⁵ The Truman administration’s reaction to the Greek and Turkish crises was shaped by this vision of defending liberal values, and the lessons they learned from the early Soviet attempts to expand their influence were filtered through this vision of an ideological conflict as much as a geopolitical one.

Second, following from this different understanding of world politics, Kennan’s designs aimed to primarily contain the power of the Soviet Union, not the appeal of international Communism as an ideological threat to Western civilization. His recommendations thus did not incorporate the need to advance a politico-economic liberal global world order or advance America’s ideals. Kennan’s vision of the Containment strategy was not one based on America’s unique leadership of a liberal world order, as President Truman contended in his speeches. For example, in 1948 Truman portrayed the Cold War and America’s role in it using a values-driven framework that relied on a vision of American global leadership clearly more expansive than Kennan’s geopolitical analysis

would find necessary or prudent: "We are faced with the leadership of the free people of the world. We must assume that leadership, if we expect our children not to have to go through the same situation that we had to go through during the last five or six years. Get these things in your mind, and use your influence to do what God almighty intended us to do: to get the right sort of peace in the world."⁴⁶

Truman called on the American people to support anti-Communist forces around the globe, not only in areas of great geopolitical importance in the competition for influence with Moscow. Kennan advocated a "strongpoint" defense of several important centers of geopolitical interests, rather than a "perimeter" defense on a global scale. This narrower focus, however, would have undermined the expansion of a politico-economic liberal world order, a key element in America's Cold War strategy. As political scientist Colin Dueck puts it, "the liberal and anti-Communist elements of containment undermined sharp distinctions between regions of vital importance and regions of lesser interest. If Communism was such a threat, then it had to be contained everywhere; and if a liberal international order was to be established, then it had to be promoted worldwide."⁴⁷ Therefore, in practice, the Truman Doctrine moved beyond Kennan's careful demarcation of Western Europe and Japan as the only geopolitical theaters of Containment.

The differences between the Truman Doctrine and Kennan's understanding of a Containment grand strategy were evident from the very beginning, as Kennan opposed US military aid to Greece and Turkey.⁴⁸ At Truman's request, Congress appropriated \$400 million to the two countries, and Washington sent the aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* to the region as well as military advisors. Thanks in part to the US commitment of these resources, the Greek government finally crushed the Communist insurgency by 1949, and the new democratic Turkish government maintained military control of the Dardanelles Straits. In the short term, therefore, the emergent Truman Doctrine had a significant measure of success. Washington successfully contained the spread of Communism in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, and, moreover, Greece and Turkey joined NATO in 1952 and remained two important allies for the rest of the Cold War.

In the longer term, the legacy of the Truman Doctrine for the shape of American Cold War strategy remains more controversial. Kennan's objection to the doctrine's apparent universalism and its values-based principles and rhetoric appeared prescient to many observers during the Vietnam era. It is plausible to contend that, had US leaders followed more closely the parameters of Containment as laid out in Kennan's designs, they could have avoided some of the

enormous costs of that war in Southeast Asia, as the next chapter will discuss in more detail. The same argument could also be made for other Cold War cases where the United States offered military assistance to anti-Communist regimes in places of dubious strategic importance, although the future chapters will show that such aid was most problematic where it went to authoritarian governments, not to “free peoples” as stipulated in the Truman Doctrine. Moreover, when the administration appeared to adopt a narrow perimeter defense, it soon had to face the Communist invasion of a country left outside the perimeter, as was the case during the Korean War. A more restrained US strategy could have led to other such bold Communist aggressions. Last but certainly not least, the moral clarity of the strategic vision offered by the Truman Doctrine arguably served not only to maintain bipartisan public support for Containment for most of the Cold War, a remarkable achievement by itself, but also to position the United States as the leader of the free world in the global war of ideas against the USSR that ultimately contributed decisively to the collapse of the Soviet empire.

The Marshall Plan

The period from 1947 to 1950 led to a further evolution of the Containment strategy. The adoption of the Marshall Plan represented a more institutionalized extension of the economic commitments begun under the Truman Doctrine. This financial assistance plan aimed to help Western democratic states resist Communist influence.⁴⁹ Together with the formation of NATO discussed next, these two elements represented a key formative step in the evolution of Containment into a multidimensional strategy incorporating economic, military, and diplomatic instruments of power aimed at containing the spread of Communism and of Soviet influence.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Marshall Plan was the lack of a detailed *plan*. David Ellwood’s historical account of the Marshall Plan, aptly subtitled “*A Strategy That Worked*,” begins by emphasizing the emergent nature of the plan: “It didn’t start as a plan, and some of the veterans said it never did become a plan. Its own second-in-command, Harlan Cleveland, called it ‘a series of improvisations . . . a continuous international happening.’”⁵⁰ A State Department official at the time compared the Marshall Plan to a “flying saucer—nobody knows what it looks like, how big it is, in what direction it is moving, or whether it really exists.”⁵¹ Indeed, even George Kennan claimed that “we have no plan” in a briefing to Secretary Marshall a full six weeks after the secretary’s famous

speech announcing the Marshall Plan.⁵² A detailed historical study of the formation of the Marshall Plan unequivocally concludes with the following assessment of the decision-making process: "The picture of the State Department engaged in beehive-like activity, producing studies of Europe's problems and providing a rational, long-range policy that Marshall used for his Harvard address, is out of focus. It is out of harmony with Marshall's frequent protests that he had not planned at the time and it does not reflect the contemporary statements and judgments of Clayton, Kennan, Lovett, and others who participated closely in the development of the Marshall Plan."⁵³

The origins of the Marshall Plan can arguably be found in a memorandum written by Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs William L. Clayton, upon returning from a trip to Europe. In it, he highlighted the disastrous economic conditions of Western Europe and warned that "without further substantial aid from the United States, economic, social and political disintegration will overwhelm Europe . . . Aside from the awful implications which this would have for the future peace and security of the world, the immediate effects on our domestic economy would be disastrous."⁵⁴ Even more convincing than his memo, Clayton made passionate oral presentations to Marshall and Acheson and was very persuasive in describing the urgency of launching an aid program, thus contributing perhaps more than most to the defense secretary's subsequent speech at Harvard announcing the program.⁵⁵ A week after Clayton's memo, Marshall, without making any reference to magnitude or duration, told his Harvard audience that European governments should seize the initiative and come up with an economic aid plan that the US could fund. Looking back at this, the plan's official historian noted how that one-paragraph "suggestion" launched a program that "evolved swiftly into a vast, spirited, international adventure: as the enterprise unfolded, it became many things to many men."⁵⁶

George Kennan and his Policy Planning Staff were also involved in the debates surrounding this initiative. An analysis of their work and of its impact shines some light on the limited role of formal planning in the Marshall Plan. The State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) was the source of one of the first government planning efforts credited by some later historians with contributing to the launching of the Marshall Plan; the committee also produced the documents that Kennan and his staff drew upon in preparing their subsequent reports.⁵⁷ In particular, the suggestions to focus on increasing European coal production, and on integration and coordination of economic programs, were appropriated by Kennan in the report produced for Secretary Marshall,

known as PPS/1.⁵⁸ As Marshall Plan historian John Gimbel showed, however, the impact of the SWNCC report was rather modest, and its recommendations were significantly modified: "It listed eight nations that needed aid within a few months. Three of them were never included in the European recovery program. It listed eight nations that had no urgent need for aid. Five of them were initially included in the Marshall Plan."⁵⁹

The same discrepancies between the planned strategy and the actual decisions can also be found in Kennan's famous PPS/1 report, "Policy with Respect to American Aid to Western Europe," a document considered by Gaddis to be "certainly the most influential" paper to have come out of the Policy Planning Staff during Kennan's tenure as head of the office. The report was influential, in Gaddis's narrative, because it formed the basis for Secretary Marshall's speech at Harvard, along with Clayton's memorandum.⁶⁰ However, another historical analysis of that era by Miscamble described this report as "having produced nothing that could be construed as a plan or program . . . It was not a plan, except as it was a plan to develop a plan."⁶¹ As shown earlier, Clayton and Kennan had different views on a variety of issues related to the approach to Europe's reconstruction. These differences, as well as the continued lack of support for Kennan's views in other parts of the State Department, eventually led to policies at odds with Kennan's more specific recommendations.⁶² For example, Kennan did not recommend that Great Britain and Germany be included in the Marshall Plan. Moreover, his strong conclusion that the Marshall Plan should replace the Truman Doctrine (which he opposed) was contrary to the view of the Marshall Plan as being a complement to the Truman Doctrine, which is how Truman and Acheson understood it at the time.⁶³

In the following months, the administration had to drastically change another key principle of PPS/1. Even though the Europeans were supposed to take the lead on the amount and details of the funds required, at the Paris Conference they initially proved unable to arrive at a position acceptable to the American delegation. Therefore, US officials took a more active leadership role in setting the terms of the program.⁶⁴ Once the Europeans reduced their demands, Secretary Marshall set up an Advisory Steering Committee to work with Congress on funding, a challenging task that would bring further modifications to the final plan.⁶⁵ Hence, the planned approach (the Europeans would define the plan, and the United States would fund it) was changed along the way to one in which Washington instead took the leading role in sorting out the details of the program.

The Marshall Plan successfully accomplished both its short-term goal of as-

sisting in Western Europe's economic recovery and also its longer-term political and grand strategic goals of furthering integration along Western capitalist democratic lines in order to prevent the spread of Communist influence. Throughout the four years of the plan's existence, the United States provided about \$13 billion (approximately \$133 billion in 2017 dollars) in aid to the participating countries, with Britain, Germany, and France receiving the largest amounts. The unprecedented twenty years of economic growth in Western Europe sparked in part by this large amount of aid allowed for Washington to advance its Cold War strategic objectives in this region. More specifically, the Marshall Plan fostered democratic political stability and promoted free trade in the region, thus increasing political and economic ties among its allies as well as between Western Europe and the United States. The close political-economic relations also contributed to the successful creation of a formal security alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Echoing the high regard for the Marshall Plan among both scholars and policy practitioners, two historians recently went so far as to describe it as "the most successful single foreign policy initiative ever undertaken by the United States."⁶⁶

Judging by its name, the Marshall *Plan* should be a great example supporting the Grand Strategy model, and therefore a more difficult test for the Emergent Strategy model. However, this section showed that even though the Policy Planning Unit led by Kennan was involved in its formation, the actual policies that made up the plan originated outside the formal planning exercises. As such, the Marshall Plan is more properly understood as an immediate crisis response to the deteriorating economic and political conditions in Europe rather than as part of a Grand Strategy. It was also a consequence of the lessons learned from the rise of Nazism in the aftermath of economic catastrophe in the Weimar Republic and from negotiating with European diplomats during the early stages of developing the contours of the plan. Lastly, it was an incremental step following the assistance offered to the Greek and Turkish governments as part of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. Thus, the process that led to the Marshall Plan matches more closely the expectations of the Emergent Strategy model than of the Grand Strategy one.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The formation of NATO in April 1949 added a strong and long-lasting pillar to Truman's strategy. While the Marshall Plan offered limited military support and

politico-economic assistance, NATO provided an unequivocal security guarantee in the form of a mutual defense treaty in order to shore up US allies and protect them from the threat of a potential Soviet attack.

The origins of NATO can be found in the efforts of British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin to find a way to “stem the further encroachment of the Soviet tide” in Western Europe. He laid out his vision for how to deal with this problem in a speech to the House of Commons: “We must organize and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilization of which we are the chief protagonists. This in my view can only be done by creating some form of union in Western Europe, whether of a formal or informal character, backed by the Americas and the Dominions.”⁶⁷ Such language, reminiscent of Churchill’s Fulton speech, was in line with the Truman Doctrine vision of a liberal world order under assault from the forces of Soviet Communism. While he never proposed directly to his American counterparts a formal treaty or military alliance, Bevin’s request for “an understanding backed by power, money, and resolution” to oppose “Soviet infiltration” set in motion the series of negotiations between the United States, Canada, and Europe over the next year that led to the adoption of the North Atlantic Treaty.⁶⁸

The American response to Bevin’s ideas reveals the lack of impact of Kennan’s grand strategic planning on this crucial formative element of Containment. Even though Kennan was the State Department’s chief strategic planner in 1947–1949, he in fact actively opposed the formation of NATO. Timothy Ireland’s study of the formation of the organization noted how two schools of thought developed inside the State Department on the question of how Washington should associate with Western European countries on military matters.⁶⁹ Kennan and his Policy Planning Staff argued that the United States should merely offer a “unilateral guarantee in the form of a presidential declaration similar to the Monroe Doctrine.” The other school of thought, represented by officials such as Undersecretary of State Lovett and the head of the Office of European Affairs, John Hickerson, “adopted an opposite point of view . . . They felt that the most effective form of association would embrace the concept of reciprocal obligations.”⁷⁰ Hickerson even proclaimed the need to overcome a principle of American diplomacy that was as old as the republic: “I don’t care whether entangling alliances have been considered worse than original sin since George Washington’s time. We’ve got to negotiate a military alliance with Western Europe in peacetime and we’ve got to do it quickly.”⁷¹

While Kennan focused on writing strategy memos to Secretary Marshall and

the National Security Council staff detailing how a formal military alliance would be unnecessary and potentially detrimental to US grand strategic objectives in Europe, Hickerson, Lovett, and their allies inside the State Department began serious negotiations with the British and Canadians at first, and then with other Europeans, on the details of a treaty that would replace the Treaty of Brussels with a formal mutual defense alliance treaty incorporating the United States, Canada, and several European states.⁷² They also worked closely with Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg, the powerful chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, to secure support on Capitol Hill for approval of the eventual treaty.

Kennan's opposition to NATO is fully understandable given his strategic preference for a realist grand strategy aimed at a balance of power that could be sustained without US military presence. Indeed, Kennan's grand design for Containment would have been ill served by the development of an institution such as NATO. As shown earlier, Kennan argued for an approach predicated on creating "independent centers of power" in Europe and East Asia. He did not see a need for formal military commitments to the defense of US allies and even considered them counterproductive to the goal of strengthening local forces.⁷³ The creation of NATO, Kennan correctly assumed, was detrimental to his preferred strategic goal of eventually restoring Europe as a global power fairly independent of either American or Soviet influence. In a report on the role of NATO, Kennan argued that US policy should be directed "toward the eventual peaceful withdrawal of both the United States and USSR from the heart of Europe, and accordingly toward the encouragement of the growth of a third force which can absorb and take over the territory between the two." The addition of NATO to most countries already part of the Marshall Plan, on the contrary, would mean "a final militarization of the present dividing line through Europe."⁷⁴

As with the debate over the Truman Doctrine, Acheson and Truman did not agree with Kennan's analysis and recommendations. His objections to NATO were thus left unanswered. On the contrary, the dominant view in the Truman administration was that an alliance was necessary to provide the sense of military strength and security that would promote political stability and economic development in Europe. This position was most forcefully advocated inside the US government by John Hickerson, who should be also recognized as one of the "true fathers of Containment."⁷⁵ Hickerson's policy choices, however, were not derived from a grand strategy he had for the Cold War, as was the case for Kennan. His position was based instead on his commitment to strong Anglo-American relations, which he developed in his previous job handling the rela-

tions with the British Commonwealth during World War II, and on his desire for US deep engagement and leadership in Europe. Critically, many other Western European leaders also shared Hickerson's view: as Norwegian historian Gier Lundestad put it, the Americans' presence in Europe was in many ways an "empire by invitation."⁷⁶

In summary, the creation of NATO took place despite, not because of, the planning done inside the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. Washington's chief strategist, George Kennan, actively opposed the formation of NATO, but he was unsuccessful in his efforts to persuade his superiors to follow his approach. The birth of the organization is owed instead to the actions of a small number of American and European diplomats committed to formalizing US military commitments to its allies. Therefore, the Emergent Strategy model's emphasis on crisis response and its long-term impact on the contours of a strategy persuasively accounts for the ultimate consequence of NATO's formation, that is, the stationing of forward-deployed troops in Europe for the next forty years of the Cold War as part of a mutual defense alliance.

Was the long-term deployment of American troops in Europe solidified by the creation of NATO a strategic success for Washington in the long run? Or should the United States have followed Kennan's preferred strategy of relying on the Western Europeans to shoulder the military burden of their defense? While the US military commitment was undoubtedly costly in financial terms, the United States nevertheless benefited greatly from the institution in terms of achieving its long-term Cold War goal of keeping Western Europe free of Soviet or Communist influence. Hal Brands' recent study of US grand strategy echoed a common view among scholars of this topic when he praised the Truman administration for the creation of NATO; this organization, Brands noted, "served as a pillar of stability and cooperation in the world's crucial strategic theater, and its founding constituted a signal achievement of Truman's presidency."⁷⁷ The presence of US military troops on the continent may have prevented the emergence of a truly "independent Europe" as a third world power, as Kennan worried it might, but at the end of the day the United States successfully maintained peace, prosperity, and stability on the continent in a way that both European and American publics by and large found both affordable and desirable. Christopher Layne criticized the US "hegemonic" military presence in Western Europe, but the successful overall outcome of these expansive American military commitments to European security are hard to ignore.⁷⁸ NATO is rightly viewed by many as one of the most successful military alliances in history, and one of the main reasons for that pos-

itive assessment is that the US troop presence served its goal of containing the Soviets while keeping the Cold War *cold*. After enormous financial and human sacrifices in fighting two world wars, after 1945 the United States achieved its long-term strategic goals in Europe with a minimum cost in American lives.

Rethinking the Grand Strategy Narrative of Containment's Formation

A number of historians have increasingly questioned the dominant Grand Strategy narrative as it pertains to the origins of Containment.⁷⁹ The most vocal historian of this school of thought is Wilson Miscamble, the author of a book-length treatment of Kennan's role in the early Cold War that ends with the following conclusion: "The structure of American foreign policy was built stone by stone, as it were, in reaction to pressing needs and challenges. Through addressing these various situations a foreign policy emerged . . . It developed functionally and through being called forth by circumstances more so than being imposed upon them . . . This point deserves emphasis and might well be appreciated by those who campaign for more long-term planning by romanticizing the Truman period as some kind of golden age for such."⁸⁰

The publication in 2011 of Kennan's authorized biography by John Gaddis also has led to further debate among historians about how much influence and impact Kennan's planning really had during the formation of Containment.⁸¹ However, even though a number of historians have criticized the master narrative of Containment, there has been little effort on the part of political scientists or policy analysts to offer an alternative theoretical model to explain the successful formation of Containment other than the Grand Strategy model.

As this chapter shows, on balance, the Emergent Strategy model explains the formation of three of the most successful elements of Containment better than the Grand Strategy one. Even though Kennan's plans such as the "Long Telegram," the "X Article," and PPS/1 had some impact on the contours of the early Containment strategy, the emergent elements nevertheless had a more significant impact than the designed ones on the strategy's short- and long-term success. Kennan's writings were most influential in the conception of Containment, as opposed to the extremes of war or appeasement, and this contribution represents evidence in favor of the Grand Strategy model. However, Kennan's positions differed in nontrivial ways from those ultimately adopted by Truman on the key questions of *what* should be contained, *how* to do it, *where* to do it, and what role the United

States should play in doing it. The administration's answers to these questions came at the end of three years of incremental decision-making and emergent learning.

As they went through the discussions leading to the adoption of the Truman Doctrine and the formation of NATO, Truman and Acheson came to believe that the United States had a special responsibility as leader of the free world to bear a large part of the military costs of deterring Communist expansion. The United States therefore not only provided military assistance to countries facing Communist threats but also maintained troops deployed under formal alliances in key places such as Europe and East Asia to deter Soviet or Communist advances. This role of America as the leader of the free world engaged in a long-term conflict against the Soviets and their allies is different than the more limited role that Kennan envisioned for Washington. Truman chose not to base the protection of US security interests on the possible revival of an independent Western Europe capable of defending itself, as Kennan would have preferred.

Moreover, the economic aid provided by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan was integrated into a general concern with promoting a liberal world order based on US political and economic values—democracy, free trade, and open markets. The language of the Truman Doctrine, with its emphasis on helping free people in danger of being overtaken by Communists and of promoting a liberal politicoeconomic world order, clearly represents a departure from Kennan's grand strategy because it was universal and political/ideological in its applicability rather than being narrowly focused on a balance of power against the Soviet threat.

Another piece of evidence supporting the Emergent Strategy view is that even Kennan expressed serious doubts about how much impact his strategic designs actually had. Such doubts were expressed as much during his time in government as after he left government. Thus, they could not be attributed primarily to the hindsight bias common in autobiographies or to his desire to distance himself from some of the failures of Containment during the Vietnam era. Kennan's own position that he did not actually have much influence with Truman in developing the pillars of Containment, or at least not as much as Secretary of State Acheson had, is perhaps best captured in a metaphor by Miscamble: "Kennan was Plato, more preoccupied with ideal forms than with gritty reality, while Acheson was Aristotle, focusing on the world as it was, adapting as necessary to get things done."⁸²

Secretary Acheson's approach to strategy-making was indeed generally more

action-oriented than it was reliant on following deliberate plans. After all, Acheson once admitted that “the thing to do was to get on and do what had to be done as quickly and effectively as you could.”⁸³ Such an approach contradicts the Grand Strategy school’s recommendation for successful statecraft, which led some historians like Gaddis to be quite critical of him and by extension of the Truman administration. Even as he considered Kennan the “architect” of Containment, Gaddis at the same time criticized Truman for not following more closely Kennan’s calculated long-term designs: “There was in the administration very much a sense of direction without destination—of marching forthrightly forward into unknown areas, without clear sense of what the ultimate objective was, how long it would take to achieve it, and at what cost.”⁸⁴ Truman in fact had a powerful vision for America’s role in the world, as shown in this chapter. And while it is true that the Truman Doctrine, The Marshall Plan, and NATO all emerged primarily out of the need for responses to the immediate crises facing policymakers, rather than being part of an overall Grand Strategy, the results of Truman’s decision-making in these cases were not nearly as negative as Grand Strategy proponents would expect based on the administration’s reliance on incremental decisions and emergent learning rather than on a long-term grand design. The three episodes presented in this chapter are generally considered incremental steps of great importance in the formation of the two related principles that defined Containment as a strategy: a global commitment to economic, political, and military aid to combat the spread of Communism, and the forward deployment of troops operating within formal military alliances in Europe and East Asia. To the extent that the expansive commitments undertaken through the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and NATO have contributed to the ultimate success of the United States in the Cold War, then Truman’s early actions provide support to the Emergent Strategy model.⁸⁵

Globalizing Containment

NSC-68 and the Korean War

The Truman administration's early successes in the Cold War, such as the repeal of Soviet-backed Communist forces in the Mediterranean and the development of the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to provide economic assistance and security guarantees to Western Europe, were nevertheless overshadowed in 1949 by a couple of major setbacks. First, America's nuclear monopoly ended when the Soviet Union tested its first nuclear weapon. And second, Mao Zedong's forces won the civil war against the US-supported Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-Shek and forced him and his forces into exile on the island of Taiwan, thus basically transforming mainland China into a Communist state. In light of these worrisome external developments, and confronted domestically with increasing criticism from Congressional Republicans for "losing China" and for being "soft on communism," the administration launched a comprehensive study to reevaluate America's grand strategy. As Harry S. Truman put it to the new secretary of state, Dean Acheson, he wanted "a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans."¹

Acheson selected Paul Nitze, George Kennan's successor as head of Policy Planning in the State Department, as the head of the team that prepared the secret grand strategy report labeled NSC-68. This study, declassified decades later, is regarded by many of today's Washington national security experts as an exemplar of successful grand strategic planning, one that should be emulated by current policymakers. As Steven Rearden wrote about NSC-68's impact, "Some regard it as the essential blueprint of the Truman administration's cold war military buildup, while others go so far as to say it was a clarion call for the United States to assume the role of global policeman. That its impact was profound is generally agreed."² Ernest May, the editor of an entire volume dedicated to the study's formulation and impact, remarked that some writers "hailed it as the master plan that brought victory in the Cold War," and, "citing the need for a post-cold war strategy, they called for a new NSC-68."³ Similarly, Melvyn Leffler

calls the report “the most renowned strategic paper of the Cold War,” and Etzold and Gaddis described it as “the most elaborate effort made by US officials during the early Cold War years to integrate political, economic, and military considerations into a comprehensive statement of national security policy.”⁴ Given the document’s current reputation in Washington as a kind of master plan for the Cold War, this chapter examines NSC-68 and the context it came from through the lenses of the Grand Strategy and the Emergent Strategy models in order to determine whether the document indeed represents a successful grand strategic framework that brought coherence and consistency to America’s foreign policy during that era and beyond.

The chapter begins by presenting and discussing the strategic analysis and recommendations proposed by NSC-68. In order to analyze the report’s impact on America’s grand strategy in the 1950–1953 timeframe and beyond, I will examine several decisions surrounding the US involvement in the Korean War and the legacies of those decisions for America’s Cold War grand strategy. Both contemporary and later observers generally regard the outbreak of that war as the key catalyst leading to the adoption of some of NSC-68’s recommendations, particularly in regard to the increase in US defense spending.⁵ The decisions surrounding the fighting of the Korean War also shaped other elements of US Cold War grand strategy, such as the decision to permanently station significant US military forces in South Korea, Japan, and NATO countries, German rearmament, and the extension of US commitments to parts of East Asia and Southeast Asia.

Threat Analysis and Strategy Recommendations of NSC-68

The first two sections of the strategy report describe the “Present World Crisis” and the overall purpose of American grand strategy. The document begins on an ominous note: “Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world.”⁶ Even more worrisome, the conflict between the United States and the USSR had reached a critical moment that demanded immediate action on the part of the United States to prevent the Soviets from achieving a potentially decisive advantage: “any substantial further extension of the area under the domination of the Kremlin would raise the possibility that no coalition adequate to confront the Kremlin with greater strength could be assembled.” Therefore, the report’s subsequent analysis is grounded in the idea that in order to preserve the American way of life and secure the interests of the

United States in a dangerous world, Washington must devote its efforts to the “frustration of Kremlin’s design.”

In a third section devoted to explaining this presumed “Kremlin design,” a term that appears dozens of times throughout the document, the authors summarize their view of the nature of the threat posed by the Soviet Union:

The fundamental design of those who control the Soviet Union and the international communist movement is to retain and solidify their absolute power, first in the Soviet Union and second in the areas now under their control. In the minds of the Soviet leaders, however, achievement of this design requires the dynamic extension of their authority and the ultimate elimination of any effective opposition to their authority.

The design, therefore, calls for the complete subversion or forcible destruction of the machinery of government and structure of society in the countries of the non-Soviet world and their replacement by an apparatus and structure subservient to and controlled from the Kremlin. To that end Soviet efforts are now directed toward the domination of the Eurasian land mass. The United States, as the principal center of power in the non-Soviet world and the bulwark of opposition to Soviet expansion, is the principal enemy whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed by one means or another if the Kremlin is to achieve its fundamental design.

The next chapter of the study is dedicated to explaining the “underlying conflict” in the realm of “ideas and values” between the two superpowers. NSC-68 is infused with the idealistic language present in President Truman’s speeches at the time. The Cold War was not merely a geopolitical conflict between two great powers but also a contest between the idea of “freedom,” on the one hand, and “slavery” on the other. The conflict between the two was unavoidable: “The antipathy of slavery to freedom explains the iron curtain, the isolation, the autarchy of the society whose end is absolute power. The existence and persistence of the idea of freedom is a permanent and continuous threat to the foundation of the slave society; and it therefore regards as intolerable the long continued existence of freedom in the world. What is new, what makes the continuing crisis, is the polarization of power which now inescapably confronts the slave society with the free.”

In a noticeable omission, the report divides the world into the “free world” and the “Communist world” without addressing the difficult cases in which an authoritarian but non-Communist government is asking for US assistance in fighting against Communist-backed forces.

Given this ideological view of the global Communist threat, it followed that the United States needed to defend and contain the entire “perimeter” between the Communist and the free world, not merely the selected “strongpoints” Kennan had argued needed to be kept out of the Soviet orbit in order to maintain the balance of power. In unambiguous language, NSC-68 declared that “the assault on free institutions is world-wide now, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere.” This monolithic view of Communism was a trademark of NSC-68 and a key difference between Nitze’s and Kennan’s views of Containment.

In addition to the primary goal of countering the Kremlin’s design, NSC-68 also argued that the United States could not focus solely on containing the expansion of the Soviet Union and of Communism but also had to play a leadership role in promoting a liberal politico-economic world order: “In a shrinking world, which now faces the threat of atomic warfare, it is not an adequate objective merely to seek to check the Kremlin design, for the absence of order among nations is becoming less and less tolerable. This fact imposes on us, in our own interests, the responsibility of world leadership.”

In its last section, the report laid out a number of courses of action for US strategy and made a recommendation in favor of one of these options. The four courses of action discussed were:

- a. Continuation of current policies, with current and currently projected programs for carrying out these policies;
- b. Isolation;
- c. War; and
- d. A more rapid building up of the political, economic, and military strength of the free world than provided under current a, with the purpose of reaching, if possible, a tolerable state of order among nations without war and of preparing to defend ourselves in the event that the free world is attacked.

Nitze and his team, as is not entirely surprising given how the options were phrased, recommended the fourth course of action as the most desirable one. And while there was some mention of economic and diplomatic efforts, the primary recommendation of NSC-68 was for an extensive military buildup to counter the expanding Soviet conventional and nuclear military capabilities: “It is clear that a substantial and rapid building up of strength in the free world is necessary to support a firm policy intended to check and roll back the Kremlin’s drive for world domination.” The last sentence is important because it shows how

NSC-68 not only called for *containing* the Soviet Union but also flirted with the idea of *rolling back* its influence. Such a program would be “costly,” the document admits, but “budgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that our very independence as a nation may be at stake.”

To achieve the strategy’s overarching goal, NSC-68 contends, the free world needs to continue to “develop a successfully functioning political and economic system and a vigorous political offensive against the Soviet Union.” However, such positive developments were in turn contingent on America providing “an adequate military shield under which they can develop.” NSC-68 also addresses why negotiating with the Soviet Union “is not possible as a separate course of action but rather as a means of gaining support for a program of building strength.” Even though the report acknowledged as an “ultimate” objective the negotiation of a settlement with the Soviet Union, it also cautioned that “such a settlement can only record the progress which the free world will have made in creating a political and economic system in the world so successful that the frustrations of Kremlin’s design for world domination will be complete.”

A main concern of the authors of NSC-68 was the danger of America’s allies slowly falling into the hands of the Communist world. The allies’ current military weaknesses, the document predicted, would lead to a weakening of their political will to stand up to the USSR: “The United States and the other free countries do not now have the forces in being and readily available to defeat local Soviet moves with local action . . . Unless our combined strength is rapidly increased, our allies will tend to become increasingly reluctant to support a firm policy on our part and increasingly anxious to seek other solutions.” Consequently, the document asks for American and allied conventional (i.e., non-nuclear) forces to be rapidly built up so as to be able to defend “Western Hemisphere and essential allied areas” in the case of a Soviet attack. More specifically, the document notes that the military buildup is required so that the United States, in cooperation with its allies, could provide for defense against an air attack on the United States and Canada and against “air and surface attack on the UK and Western Europe, Alaska, the Western Pacific, Africa, and the Near and Middle East, and on the long lines of communication to these areas.”

In its discussion of political and economic measures, the report lists a series of priorities needed to “frustrate the Kremlin design.” The first one is defined as providing an “adequate political and economic framework for the achievement of our long-term objectives.” The assumption of the report is that the “problems faced by the free countries in their efforts to build a successfully functioning

system lie not so much in the field of economics as in the field of politics.” In addition to an increase in the US defense budget to allow for the buildup, NSC-68 also calls for a substantial increase in military assistance programs to US allies. Surprisingly, the report does not put dollar amounts on the estimated costs of its recommendations or specify force structure requirements for the new missions it envisions for the US military. The strategy paper goes on to talk about the need to increase the economic assistance programs, but again it offers little specifics. Another priority area highlighted in NSC-68 is the waging of psychological warfare calculated to “encourage mass defections from Soviet allegiance,” including measures and operations in the “fields of economic warfare and political and psychological warfare with a view to fomenting and supporting unrest and revolt in selected strategic satellite countries.” Lastly, a number of suggestions refer to domestic actions needed to support the needed annual increases in defense budgets, such as “a concerted attack on the problem of the US balance of payments; . . . reduction of Federal expenditures for purposes other than defense and foreign assistance; . . . [and] increased taxes.” Once again, the report warns, “budgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that our very independence as a nation may be at stake.”

In summary, Paul Nitze and his team outlined in NSC-68 a grand strategy for the Cold War grounded on a number of interrelated ideas and assumptions. To begin with, as far as America’s overarching goals on the world scene, the report predicted that the major threat to US national security interests for the foreseeable future would come from the so-called “Kremlin design” for world conquest. Therefore the main goal should be to frustrate this design by fighting the spread of Communism wherever it appeared and even undermining its support behind the Iron Curtain. Critically, NSC-68 generally regarded all Communist states (except Tito’s Yugoslavia) as a monolith; consequently, the fight between the West and the Communist world was not only a struggle between blocs of states with competing geopolitical interests but also an ideological conflict between democracy/freedom and totalitarianism. As for the means, NSC-68’s most important recommendation called for heavy US conventional rearmament, in addition to a nuclear arsenal, in order to withstand a surprise Soviet attack on the US homeland or on America’s allies and partners in the free world. The report, however, was short on specific policies to achieve these broad goals as well as on the size and details of the increase in defense spending it recommended. Lastly, rather than sharing Kennan’s concern about limited means and the inability of the United States to be the main defender of the free world, the NSC-68 drafters

anticipated that the US government could find the financial resources to fund the buildup by shifting resources from other parts of the economy and by increasing taxes.

NSC-68 might have remained one of the many government strategy assessments produced in Washington on a regular basis without great impact on policy-making but for one singular event: the outbreak of the Korean War. According to one of the most complete examinations of NSC-68, the document was “threatened with irrelevancy” before the outbreak of the Korean War because of the reluctance of the president and of Congress to go along with the high costs of the recommendations.⁷ As Secretary Acheson put it later, “Korea came along and saved us.”⁸ In addition to making it politically possible to raise the defense budget, the Korean War also shaped the evolution of US strategy in other ways by “locking in” US policymakers to a series of strategic choices that had a great impact on the future of Containment and on the rest of the Cold War strategy. In the remainder of this chapter, I examine the adoption of three such policy decisions, their relation with the recommendations of NSC-68, and their subsequent short-term and long-term impact on America’s strategic performance in the Cold War.

The Korean War

The unexpected military invasion of US-backed South Korea by Communist North Korea in June 1950 presented the Truman administration with the most brazen challenge yet to America’s strategic imperative of containing the spread of Communism. Shortly after the attack, the administration organized and led a United Nations–mandated military response to reverse this violation of international law and restore the sovereignty of South Korea. By the end of September, a US-led multinational force had helped the Seoul government retake control of its territory and pushed the North Koreans back across the initial border line on the thirty-eighth parallel. Looking to capitalize on the military momentum, the UN forces led by American General Douglas MacArthur crossed into North Korean territory seeking an unconditional surrender of the enemy and the reunification of the peninsula under non-Communist rule. The push by the US-led forces close to the China–North Korea border led Beijing to intervene directly in the conflict by sending tens of thousands of Chinese troops to fight alongside their Communist allies. Unprepared for this development, the US-led coalition suffered a series of military defeats, and by the end of the year it had lost control of all the territory north of the thirty-eighth parallel. The fighting went back

and forth around that initial border line for a few more months until it essentially stabilized in a stalemate through the remaining two years of the Truman presidency.

The first decision of grand strategic relevance surrounding the Korean War was how to react to the initial invasion. Senior administration officials perceived the attack of the Communists as confirming the NSC-68 prediction of an aggressive “Kremlin design” of global expansion, even by force if necessary.⁹ Truman himself exemplifies this line of thought very clearly in his recollection of his decision-making process: “Communism was acting in Korea, just as Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese had ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. I felt certain that if South Korea were allowed to fall, Communist leaders would be emboldened to override nations closer to our own shores. If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threat and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors.”¹⁰

Similarly, Secretary of State Acheson told Congress that the North Korean invasion represented “an open, clear, direct challenge” on the part of Moscow to the United States. Leffler accurately summarizes the general sentiment among top Washington officials when he writes that Truman, Acheson, and the others regarded this conflict as a “test of their resolve” to stand up to Moscow’s aggressiveness.¹¹

Such language offers support to the narrative that the strategy laid out in NSC-68 shaped the American response to this crisis, but other evidence points to some emergent elements of the decision-making process, such as references to the lessons learned from recent experiences. For example, Truman characterized South Korea as “the Greece of the Far East” and drew a direct parallel between the lessons learned from that conflict and the current situation: “If we are tough enough now, if we stand up to them like we did in Greece three years ago, they won’t take any next steps.”¹² The president talked about the importance of Iran and Greece, as well as the Berlin crisis of 1948, as successful examples of resistance to Soviet aggression that guided his decision-making. The key counterfactual question here for the design vs. emergence comparison is whether Truman would have intervened in Korea even in the absence of NSC-68, and the answer for many historians seems to be affirmative. Based on how Gaddis, among others, describes the political atmosphere at the time, one gets the feeling that the decision had more to do with the lessons learned from previous circumstances, a staple of the emergence model, than with any long-term strategic design: “To a nation still recoiling

from the 'loss' of China, still brooding over the 'lessons of Munich,' Korea quickly became a symbol of resolve regardless of its military-strategic significance."¹³

NSC-68 arguably had a more pronounced and unique impact on the second major strategic decision surrounding the conflict, the escalation of the war by crossing the thirty-eighth parallel into North Korean territory. First of all, it is certainly true that an important factor in this decision was General MacArthur's strong advocacy of this option on purely military tactical considerations, not grand strategic ones. However, Truman showed a willingness to overrule MacArthur's recommendations later in the conflict when the general went against the president's preferred strategy, so it is reasonable to assume that Truman himself favored this move into North Korean territory. What kind of longer-term strategic goals might have been pursued by the administration through a forceful unification of the peninsula? The initial objective of containing the spread of Communism, after all, had already been accomplished in broad terms after the North Korean forces got pushed out of South Korea. The analysis and long-term view present in NSC-68 plausibly led the Truman administration to take a chance and invade North Korea for two reasons.

First, the NSC-68 strategic framework led officials to think of the Korean War a part of an aggressive "Kremlin design" for world domination. Regarding the invasion as an integral part of Soviet plans for spreading Communism worldwide led US officials to focus on the ramifications of the war's outcome for many other possible theaters. The credibility of US commitments to defend its allies against armed aggression by the Soviets, a core theme of NSC-68, was seen as being put to the test by Moscow.¹⁴ As John Allison, head of the State Department's Division of Northeast Asian Affairs, put it in his arguments in favor of expanding the war into North Korea, "to leave aggressors . . . unpunished . . . would encourage others to make similar moves." As such, it is our duty to "make clear once and for all that aggression does not pay."¹⁵ Stopping at the thirty-eighth parallel and returning to the *status quo ante*, while accomplishing the strategic objective of containment in the Korean peninsula, could nevertheless signal "hesitation and timidity" to Moscow, in Acheson's words.¹⁶ Such restraint would encourage the Kremlin to engage in similarly aggressive moves in other parts of the world in pursuit of their grand plan of spreading worldwide Communism.

Second, the attempt to unify the Koreas under non-Communist rule also fits well with the idea of *rolling back* Communism, not merely *containing it*, a goal that was present in NSC-68. For example, Truman declared "Koreans have the right to be free, independent, united" and, under UN guidance, the United States would

“do [its] part to let them enjoy that right.” Similarly, Warren Austin, the US ambassador to the United Nations, declared: “Shall only part of the country [Korea] be assured freedom? I think not. The United Nations has consistently worked for a unified country, and independent Korea.” Lastly, a State Department paper argued that even the satellite states under Soviet domination in Eastern Europe might take notice of a complete Western victory in Korea.¹⁷

To sum up, we can draw two separate conclusions regarding the administration’s strategic performance in the Korean War. On the question of intervening to reverse the initial military invasion of South Korea and restore its independence, Truman was successful. In this instance, both the Grand Strategy model represented by NSC-68 and the emergent Containment / Truman Doctrine framework pointed towards a US military intervention, thus making it hard to code this as a clear-cut case of either a designed success or emergent success. On the second question, however, that of escalation past the thirty-eighth parallel, the Rollback vision hinted at in NSC-68 fits with this decision better than the Containment vision that emerged in the late 1940s. The Grand Strategy model was more influential in this instance, but, contrary to the expectations of its proponents, this led to a poor strategic outcome. The US forces fought and bled for two more years but failed to roll back Communism in North Korea, eventually settling for the same result (a border along the thirty-eighth parallel) that could have been achieved in October 1950. It did so, alas, by incurring very high unanticipated costs—of the more than 35,000 American casualties, over 28,000 occurred after China’s intervention following the crossing of the thirty-eighth parallel. Moreover, later historians casted serious doubt on the idea that the invasion was a part of a global Kremlin design as opposed to an action driven primarily by North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung for his own local reasons.¹⁸ The grand strategic framework provided by NSC-68 potentially prevented top Washington policymakers from gaining a more accurate perspective on the conflict, one that might have stopped them from making the mistake of escalation.

The Military Buildup, Strengthening NATO, and German Rearmament

The Korean War also impacted the shape of America’s Cold War strategy in policy domains only tangentially related to this specific conflict. For example, a large increase in the level of defense spending during the 1950–1953 period allowed for a military buildup that not only served the purposes of the war but

also greatly increased America's conventional military power for the rest of the Cold War. The defense budget skyrocketed from \$14 billion (2015 dollars) in 1950 to \$47.5 billion in 1951, \$60.2 billion in 1952, and \$48.6 billion in 1953.¹⁹ Even though the subsequent Dwight D. Eisenhower administration decreased the level of spending to a \$30–\$40 billion level during its years in office, nevertheless the “floor” for Cold War defense spending levels was more than doubled by the Korean War buildup. Critically important from a long-term strategy perspective, the majority of the defense spending was aimed at increasing the size and quality of US forces, not at the actual costs of fighting in Korea. And the results have been significant: “By the end of that conflict, the Army had grown by nearly one million personnel and ten divisions; the Navy had added some 450 ships and over four hundred thousand sailors; the Air Force roughly doubled in size; and the Marine Corps grew from 74,000 to 246,000 personnel,” notes historian Hal Brands.²⁰

Another important element of the Cold War strategy that followed the Korean War was a significant increase in the military capability of the United States and its allies to counter a potential conventional Soviet invasion of Western Europe. The Truman administration took a series of steps to transform NATO into a fully functional military organization able to fight a conventional war against the USSR and its allies. As early as September 1950, the Pentagon was asked to prepare for permanently deploying four to six army divisions (and tactical air support) to Europe. They would join other Western European allies under the command of an American general as part of an integrated NATO defense force.²¹ Another aspect of organizing a joint US-European effort was a diplomatic effort to set the path for German rearmament and for integration of the newly formed West German forces into NATO. The military buildup made possible the stationing of a large number of US troops in Europe, and that in turn assured the British and the French that a rearmed Germany would not represent a threat to them. The administration, thus, displayed remarkable coherence in the way it tied together its policies to counter a possible USSR military attack in Europe. Later scholars credited the coherence of these post-Korean War strategic decisions to the impact of NSC-68, but does the available evidence show that these decisions really were part of an integrated Grand Strategy as laid out in that document?²²

On the one hand, as is evident from the passages quoted earlier in this chapter, the document's recommendations did call for a sustained military buildup of mostly conventional forces. This policy was indeed implemented by the Defense Department after the outbreak of the Korean War. NSC-68's emphasis on build-

ing conventional military forces to withstand an attack by the USSR or its satellites was a major driver in the Pentagon's defense policy and procurement in the early 1950s. Similarly, the decision to station US troops in Europe in large numbers under a NATO command is compatible with the main grand strategic vision of NSC-68 for US leadership of the free world against the military threat of global Communism. These episodes clearly provide significant support for the Grand Strategy model's explanation for the Truman administration's 1950–1953 military buildup and for its actions strengthening NATO's operational capabilities.

On the other hand, the story is a bit more complicated than simply crediting these actions to the role of NSC-68 as a grand strategic guiding force. After all, Truman was committed to a lower military budget even after approving NSC-68. The decision to adopt the report's call for higher budgets came only after North Korea invaded South Korea a few months after the completion of the document.²³ Some later historians looked back on the declassified document and doubted its impact because, as Gaddis and Etzold wrote, NSC-68 revealed a "considerable gap between concept and implementation."²⁴ If one thinks of the definition of strategy only in the classical way that most academic strategists employ it—as an effort to formulate a plan that matches your means with desired ends, and then implement it—then NSC 68 fell short because it did not discuss how to pay for the achievement of its expansive objectives. Another historian critical of the document, Paul Hammond, concluded his detailed study of it by stating that "[NSC-68] was only a general statement of policy without a definite settlement of its meaning in terms of tangible decisions about budgets, procurements and forces . . . Undoubtedly, much of what was done in the Korean military buildup would have been done anyway."²⁵ Lastly, some officials made comments indicating a lesson-learning process after the Korean conflict that led to the intense military preparations for a possible military conflict with the Soviet bloc. As Secretary Acheson said, "The profound lesson of Korea is that, contrary to every action preceding, the USSR took a step which risked—however remotely—general war."²⁶

Despite the counterarguments above, the military buildup and the militarization of NATO (including the German rearmament issue) nevertheless should be classified as a relatively successful example of grand strategic planning and implementation on the part of the Truman administration. While NSC-68 might have lacked some specifics on the logistics of the buildup and on how to pay for it, such details do not necessarily belong in a grand strategy document. Instead, one of its main roles was to help the administration push its priorities through the bureaucracy; as Secretary Acheson recalled, "the purpose of NSC-68 was to

so bludgeon the mass mind of top government that not only could the President make a decision but that decision could be carried out.”²⁷ It is true that the Korean War led to an increase in the general perception of a global conflict against an implacable Communist bloc bent on aggressive behavior, including inside the administration, in Congress, and among the American public.²⁸ However, that perception by itself cannot account for the decision to focus so intently on increasing Western Europe’s defenses with conventional American troops forward deployed, or for the massive increase in the size of the US military. The document’s recommendation clearly permeated the substance of the policy decisions surrounding the military buildup, and the buildup generally achieved the goal of providing Western Europe with a security umbrella for the rest of the Cold War. Therefore, this mini-case study should be coded as supporting the Grand Strategy paradigm.

Globalizing Containment: Commitments to East Asia and Indochina

The actions surrounding the Korean War not only led the United States to a commitment to the military defense of South Korea but also caused Washington to assume or strengthen military commitments toward other countries in the region. Three cases are worth mentioning here, given their importance for the extension of America’s Containment strategy from Europe to Asia: Japan, Taiwan, and French Indochina.

First, the Korean War brought about a subtle shift in Washington’s policy toward Japan. The Truman administration always had an interest in fostering a stable and prosperous Japan integrated in the Western political and economic world. However, the Korean conflict added new urgency to the efforts to rebuild Japan’s economy and, more relevant for US strategy, elevated Tokyo’s importance in the eyes of American policymakers as the main forward base of military operations for America’s Containment efforts in East Asia. Revealingly, John Foster Dulles, the Truman administration’s lead negotiator with Tokyo during 1950 and 1951, regarded the North Korean invasion as likely a part of a “Kremlin design” aimed at Japan. In language similar to that evoked by NSC-68, he argued that “the Communist offensive in Korea was probably aimed at getting control over Japan, for had Korea been conquered Japan would have fallen without an open struggle.”²⁹ Therefore, the administration linked its efforts to reverse the invasion of South Korea with its goal of preventing Communist forces from eventually

reaching the much larger prize of Japan. The Korean War convinced Washington policymakers to abandon fears of a potential resurgence of Tokyo's militarism and instead encourage rearmament and the formation of a capable Japanese Self-Defense Force. As a State Department paper put it, "The Korean conflict and the deep uncertainties regarding the future now make it imperative . . . to create Japanese forces designed to contribute to the defense of the islands."³⁰ Through a couple of treaties signed simultaneously on September 8, 1951, the United States and Japan formally ended the occupation without a need for war reparations, while at the same time the two countries agreed to the establishment of a large American military presence in Japan for the foreseeable future in order to support regional security. On balance, the evolution of America's successful strategy regarding Japan shows enough elements of successful long-range planning to be justifiably coded as confirming the expectations of the Grand Strategy model.

Second, fighting Communist Chinese troops during the Korean War contributed to a strengthening of America's military commitment to the military defense of Taiwan against a possible Communist invasion. As the American troops prepared to intervene in Korea, the Pentagon positioned the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait. This action, undertaken to support the Korean War effort, nevertheless marked the beginning of a multidecade military commitment on the part of Washington to support Taiwan's government by military means if needed. There are some clues that this decision would fit with the vision of NSC-68, but most of the evidence leads in the opposite direction, suggesting that this move was an incremental, emergent policy locking the United States into a commitment that had not been part of a deliberate, long-term grand strategy. For example, Secretary Acheson and the Joint Chiefs of Staff did express some worries that a takeover of Taiwan by Chinese Communists would eventually lead to Soviet bases on the island.³¹ However, even though the decision to provide military guarantees to Taiwan's Nationalists may have been partly motivated by a view of international Communism as a Soviet-controlled monolith, as claimed in NSC-68, the decision itself was primarily caused by the military necessities of supporting the US troops fighting the Korean War.³² The commitment to support Taiwan was not part of a long-term grand strategy for America's goals in East Asia but rather an emergent response to a rapidly evolving situation precipitated by the military necessities of the Korean War.

Third, the expansion of the Containment grand strategy in Asia following the Korean War and NSC-68 also influenced America's decision to provide military support to the French effort to beat back Communist insurgents in Indochina.

The administration prioritized the delivery of military weapons and training to the French and to their local Vietnamese allies in the fight against the Viet Minh Communist guerillas, and in fact aid for Indochina was regarded by senior officials as second in importance only to that for Korea in terms of containing the spread of Communism.³³ Secretary Acheson, among others, expressed publicly his concern for a Soviet takeover of Southeast Asia and the negative impact of such a move for the US position in the Cold War.³⁴ While subsequent presidents bore most of the responsibility for America's heavy involvement in the Vietnam War in later decades, Truman's actions nevertheless represented the first step in that direction. A persuasive argument can be made that Washington's subsequent tragic actions in attempting to prevent the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia represent a culmination of the ideas present in NSC-68, such as the view of Communist movements as being directed by Moscow and consequently of the need to counter this "Kremlin design" for global domination. Having said that, the evidence is not entirely one-sided on the link between the grand strategy of NSC-68 and the eventual war in Vietnam. In a detailed study of America's involvement in that conflict, Yuen Foong Khong showed that an emergent process of lessons learned from the Korean conflict also had a key role in the decisions surrounding the Vietnam War.³⁵

In hindsight, it is evident that America's military commitments to the spread of Communism in Asia had mixed results in the long run. The case of Japan could reasonably be coded as a planned strategic success, while the commitment to Taiwan was closer to an emergent policy that was reasonably successful in the long run. America's commitment to Indochina, alas, evolved into a major failure for US foreign policy. If the strategic mistakes leading to that policy can be blamed on the globalization of Containment brought about by the arguments present in NSC-68, such an argument contradicts the expectations of the Grand Strategy model that the key to positive outcomes is following a long-term vision. As we have seen, however, there is some evidence also showing an emergent path to the escalation of military commitments in Vietnam, so it is fair to say that in the case of Indochina both models generally failed to lead to a successful strategy. An interesting question following from this is why all the emergent lessons learned from Korea pointed toward heavier involvement in Vietnam, even though the costly Korean War raised plenty of worrying signs regarding the difficulty of supporting a weak local ally engaged in a war against a Communist-backed enemy. One possible answer is that the strategic clarity provided by the stark language of NSC-68, while helpful in other regards, also precluded US policymakers from

showing more flexibility and adapting their policy to the particular circumstances of Vietnam.

A Globalized and Militarized Containment Strategy

The second half of Truman's presidency witnessed a pronounced globalization of America's Containment strategy by making parts of Asia central to the fight against the spread of international Communism. This period also witnessed a remarkable increase in the Western world's military preparedness, mostly due to America's extensive military buildup from 1950 until 1954. The intellectual justification for this buildup was spelled out in NSC-68, but the decision to implement the report's recommendation to increase defense spending only became practical after the advent of the Korean War removed the budgetary constraints of US domestic politics. On balance, the episodes analyzed in this chapter showed a strategy-making process that provided some support to the Grand Strategy model but also enough contrary evidence to call into question the reputation of NSC-68 as a great exemplar of a successful grand strategy.

On the one hand, NSC-68 clearly influenced the defense policy component of America's grand strategy in the early 1950s. The document captured much better than Kennan's plans the importance of America's military power to contain the spread of Communism, a development that became an essential element of the Containment strategic framework following the war on the Korean peninsula. Among the policy decisions impacted most by NSC-68, one could find reasonably successful actions such as the post-Korea military buildup, the beefing up of NATO's forces in Europe including Germany's rearmament, and the forward-deployed American troops in Japan and South Korea. The American-led intervention in Korea also matched the spirit of NSC-68, but the decision-making leading to America's intervention also had traces of the emergent learning model; as such, the decision to intervene in Korea does not provide decisive support to either model.

On the other hand, some policy decisions influenced by NSC-68 led to poor strategic outcomes. Two episodes discussed above challenge the idea that following a grand strategy is key to strategic success: the escalation into North Korean territory and the beginning of the military commitment to Indochina. In retrospect, these strategic errors can be traced back to some of the erroneous assumptions and predictions of NSC-68. The document propagated a monolithic view of a Soviet-directed global Communist threat. Therefore, it predicted that

the USSR, in pursuit of its “Kremlin design,” would seek to “impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world.” Interpreting the conflicts of Korea and Indochina through such a strategic framework led the Truman administration to overcommitment in both instances. If the American policymakers had been less certain of their ability to anticipate the future course of the Cold War and the nature of the threats they were facing, they might have reached different conclusions in both instances. The historiography of both wars now shows that local factors had a stronger influence than any directives from Moscow, but the USSR-focused aggressive tone of NSC-68 would have made such a judgment difficult at the time.

The chapter provided similarly mixed evidence for the Emergent Strategy model. On the one hand, the intervention in Korea followed in part from a “lessons learned” decision-making process, and the long-term military commitment to Taiwan was more of an incremental step originating in a crisis response than a carefully planned decision. Both of these policies ended up as serving the US national interests reasonably well in the long run. On the other hand, however, the incremental steps to providing military support to the French and their local allies in Indochina led Washington down a tragic path in that country.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, Project Solarium, and the New Look

As the Korean War evolved into a bloody stalemate, with high costs and indecisive results, the next president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, strongly believed that the United States should avoid getting sucked into such future endeavors. Consequently, he vowed to find a better way to contain the USSR and Soviet Communism than what he perceived as the overly expensive and militaristic approach taken by Truman and spelled out in NSC-68. In fact, perhaps some of the most persuasive evidence of the limited usefulness of understanding NSC-68 as a grand strategic plan for the rest of the Cold War comes from the strong criticism heaped upon its conclusions and recommendations by Truman's immediate successor. The most important criticism Eisenhower and his team had of NSC-68 was related to the document's prescription for a large buildup of US and allied conventional military forces to counter Soviet power and influence. In the view of the new administration, this could lead to excessive expenditures on military forces, which in turn would harm the overall health of the US economy and, consequently, endanger the very way of life that the government was supposed to protect. Eisenhower and his administration had a much more limited perception of the financial means available for Containment than the authors of NSC-68: concerns about inflationary borrowing, repressive taxation, and deficit spending permeated national security debates in the new administration.

John Lewis Gaddis noticed that the assumption that economic stability and military strength were inseparable "was probably the most persistent single theme of Eisenhower's public and private utterances while in the White House."¹ The administration had a conservative fiscal outlook and worried about the impact that budget deficits and inflation could have on the American way of life. However, this concern did not translate into a rejection of the need to contain the Soviet Union and international Communism or of the need to do so on a global scale. The new administration, particularly through the voice of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, adopted the expensive definition of a *global Communist threat* as stated by Truman and Acheson rather than Kennan's narrower focus

on the direct influence of Soviet Communism.² The Eisenhower team believed nevertheless that there was a cheaper way to counter this threat. The solution that they designed, dubbed the New Look, was to respond asymmetrically by exploiting the deterrent effect of the threat of massive retaliation using nuclear weapons, and by expanding the use of tools like covert operations and military aid to local anti-Communist allies.

In addition to altering the substance of the strategy, the new president also set about to improve the process of strategy-making inside the White House and bring it more in line with the tenets of the Grand Strategy model he internalized during his time in the military. He was fond of repeating the maxim he learned from his days in the army: "Plans are worthless, but planning is everything."³ During the presidential campaign of 1952, Eisenhower had been sharply critical of the Truman administration's strategy-making process; "a purgatory of improvisation" characterized by "stop-and-start planning," he called it. Instead, Eisenhower vowed that once in office he would formulate and pursue a "'cold war' national strategy."⁴ To plan systematically and rigorously such a grand strategy, Eisenhower would establish "a commission of the most capable civilian and military minds in our land" to "critically review the political policies governing our military program, and the 'military program itself in all its significant details.'"⁵

In the summer of 1953, Eisenhower followed through on his campaign pledge and launched Operation Solarium, an elaborate strategic planning exercise organized by the White House to consider the grand strategic options available to the United States and help the president choose the one most likely to achieve the administration's goals.⁶ The main impetus for the review was a sense that the current strategy inherited from the Truman administration would lead to a further weakening of the US position in the Cold War relative to the Soviets. For example, Secretary Dulles warned that "unless we change this policy, or get some break, we will lose bit by bit the free world, and break ourselves financially"; the president agreed that "the present policy was leading to disaster," mostly because it would both cede the initiative to the Soviets and also be unaffordable in the long run.⁷ The grand strategy resulting from the Solarium Project is outlined in NSC-162/2 ("Basic National Security Policy"), the final report coming out of this exercise. This strategic design, aimed specifically at improving Containment "for the long haul" according to its authors and later credited by some scholars with shaping an enduring Cold War legacy, represents the grand strategy whose impact on later policy decisions and level of success will be analyzed in the subsequent sections of the chapter.

Perhaps few scholars would go so far as to agree with Raymond Millen in claiming that “the only time the United States has had a formal grand strategy was during the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration,” but it is nevertheless true that Eisenhower’s Project Solarium has enjoyed a surge in reputation in the last decade.⁸ Grand Strategy proponents regard this exercise as one of the prominent examples of a strategic planning exercise worthy of emulation. Former top Obama Pentagon strategists Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley have called for a new Project Solarium-style exercise, arguing that “an example of a truly inclusive and integrated process of long-term strategic planning in the executive branch does exist, although one must look back more than 50 years to find it.”⁹ Barry Watts and Andy Krepinevich concur with this assessment: “The Eisenhower approach to national strategy offers useful insights concerning how the United States might improve its strategic performance.”¹⁰ The most effusive praise comes from the author of a comprehensive history of the National Security Council, David Rothkopf, who concluded that the Solarium Project was “not just the work of a good executive or a master bureaucrat or even a canny politician; it was a magisterial illustration of an effective president in action, perhaps one of the signal events of the past sixty years of the American presidency.”¹¹

In this chapter, I analyze Eisenhower’s strategic performance through the prisms of the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy frameworks by analyzing the short-term and long-term results of the New Look in two key policy areas. First, I discuss the role of the New Look in reforming the Pentagon’s strategic nuclear doctrine, force composition, and budgetary allocation. Second, I analyze the impact of the new approach on shaping Eisenhower’s efforts to contain the spread of Communism in the Third World through covert operations and other asymmetric means. Last, I discuss the implications of Eisenhower’s tenure and legacy for the debate between the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy schools of strategy-making.

Planning a New Grand Strategy: Project Solarium and NSC-162/2

One of the reasons why advocates of the Grand Strategy model hold Operation Solarium in such high regard is that it seemingly represented a “textbook” deliberate process in which competing grand strategies were debated, the assumptions of each strategy were rigorously examined, and, in the end, a farsighted strategic path was chosen. Therefore, an in-depth presentation of the lead-up to the creation of NSC-162/2 is necessary to establish how the case fits with the tenets

of the Grand Strategy model in terms of the process by which the grand strategy came about. In keeping with his military mindset focused on strategic planning and organization, President Eisenhower indeed set up Project Solarium around three groups of experts tasked with making the case for three possible alternative grand strategies: Containment, Containment plus a “red line,” and Rollback.

Project Solarium’s first group, Task Force A, argued for a Containment strategy largely along the lines preferred by George Kennan, who in fact served as the head of this task force, rather than the more global and militaristic form adopted by the Truman administration. The three main objectives guiding Task Force A’s grand strategy were:

1. To maintain over a sustained period armed forces to provide for the security of the United States and to assist in the defense of vital areas of the free world;
2. To continue to assist in building up the economic and military strength and cohesion of the free world; and
3. Without materially increasing the risk of general war, to continue to exploit the vulnerabilities of the Soviets and their satellites by political, economic and psychological measures.¹²

The task force report reflected Kennan’s thinking in focusing almost its entire efforts on Europe rather than other parts of the world. Task Force A’s recommendations did not focus primarily on military means to contain Soviet influence but rather on strengthening economic, political, and psychological programs.

Task Force B argued for a strategy of Containment supplemented by a clear warning to the Soviets that the United States would respond aggressively to any attempt to further expand their influence in the non-Communist world. Thus, its mandated objectives were written out as follows:

1. To complete the line now drawn in the NATO area and the Western Pacific so as to form a continuous line around the Soviet bloc beyond which the U.S. will not permit Soviet or satellite military forces to advance without general war;
2. To make clear to the Soviet rulers in an appropriate and unmistakable way that the U.S. has established and determined to carry out this policy; and
3. To reserve freedom of action, in the event of indigenous Communist seizure of power in countries on our side of the line, to take all measures necessary to re-establish a situation compatible with the security interests of the U.S. and its allies.¹³

Even though this task force also adopted a version of Containment as the basic foundation for its grand strategy, its focus was more global, and more unilateral, than that favored by Task Force A. The threat of nuclear retaliation could be used to hold the line against Soviet or Communist aggression everywhere, not solely in Europe. One further advantage of this emphasis on nuclear weapons was that relying on nuclear capabilities for both deterring and winning wars would require lower levels of defense spending than conventional weapons, thus allowing Eisenhower to maintain a balanced budget, which of course the administration viewed as the key to a healthy economy in the long run.

Lastly, Task Force C was tasked with defending a Rollback or Liberation grand strategy, as advocated by Dulles and other Republicans in the presidential campaign against Truman. The goal would be to “force the Soviets to shift their efforts to holding what they already have rather than concentrating on gaining control of additional territories and peoples and, at the same time, to produce a climate of victory encouraging to the free world.” Thus, the task force’s recommendations were designed to

1. Increase efforts to disturb and weaken the Soviet bloc and to accelerate the consolidation and strengthening of the free world, and
2. To create the maximum disruption and popular resistance throughout the Soviet Bloc.¹⁴

Unlike the previous two groups, this task force argued that Containment was a sterile strategy. Instead, this task force advocated accepting “higher risks” in the search for victories against Communist forces both behind the Iron Curtain and in the Third World.

Each of the three task forces presented its analysis and recommendations in front of the National Security Council (NSC) members and other officials in an all-day meeting at the White House on July 16, 1953. The president observed that, ultimately, the many similarities between the strategies were more important than the differences between them, and he asked the three teams to “agree on certain features of the three presentations as the best features and to bring about a combination of such features into a unified policy.” However, the members of the task forces could not make this “synthesis” approach work in practice, claiming that there are “fundamental differences which could be compromised into a watered-down position but not really agreed to.” In order to break the deadlock, Eisenhower instructed Robert Cutler, the special assistant to the president for national security affairs, to “work out what he thought best.”¹⁵

Over the next three months, the NSC White House staff continued to review and analyze the issues raised during the Solarium Project and eventually drafted a comprehensive grand strategy document, “Basic National Security Policy,” labeled NSC-162/2. In terms of the major grand strategic direction of US foreign policy in the Cold War, the New Look resembled broadly option B, Containment based on Massive Retaliation, with some elements of options A and C in terms of the importance of psychological operations, covert action, and economic-military support to local allies. It is worth noting also that despite the campaign rhetoric about “liberation” and “roll back,” that strategic goal listed under option C did not receive support in Eisenhower’s grand strategic plans coming out of Project Solarium.

The document states that in order to defend against the global Communist threat, United States national security policy required the development and maintenance of:

1. A strong military posture, with emphasis on the capability of inflicting massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power.
2. U.S. and allied forces in readiness to move rapidly initially to counter aggression by Soviet bloc forces and to hold vital areas and lines of communication.
3. A mobilization base, and its protection against crippling damage, adequate to insure victory in the event of general war.

These requirements, however, ought to be provided for at a reasonable cost that would allow for the “maintenance of a sound, strong, and growing economy, capable of providing through the operation of free institutions . . . over the long pull.”¹⁶ The language in the document therefore captures what scholars referred to as the “Great Equation” of the Eisenhower administration’s national security planning: achieving the security objectives of the Cold War while not harming the overall fiscal health of the US economy. Unlike the NSC-68 focus on a “peak year” of maximum danger, Eisenhower viewed the threat from the Soviet Union as a long-term problem requiring a strategy that would be financially sustainable for decades to come. And, as already mentioned, Eisenhower saw reducing defense spending in order to achieve a balanced federal budget as a crucial element of US economic strength in the long run.

The path to reducing defense spending was to shift the burden of America’s deterrent and containment commitments away from US conventional forces and instead rely on the threat of nuclear retaliation. The text of NSC-162/2 encapsulates the Massive Retaliation strategic nuclear deterrence doctrine that came

to characterize Eisenhower's New Look. In the "policy conclusions" segment of the document, this grand strategic concept is spelled out in detail: "The risk of Soviet aggression will be minimized by maintaining a strong security posture, with emphasis on adequate offensive retaliatory strength and defensive strength. This must be based on atomic capability."¹⁷ To make the point even more explicit, the document states that the United States should make clear its intention to react with nuclear military force against any aggression by Soviet bloc forces: "in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions."¹⁸ This language was added partly at the request of Treasury Secretary George Humphrey, who warned that "only their [nuclear weapons] use on a broad scale could really . . . cut the cost of the military budget." This position was supported as well by Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman William Radford, who worried that a significant shift toward a smaller military would threaten the military's ability to perform their missions "unless we could use these weapons in a blanket way."¹⁹

In order to explain and clarify the meaning of the new shift in America's grand strategy, and also to emphasize the prominent role of nuclear retaliation in its new military strategy, Secretary of State Dulles delivered a major televised speech at the Council of Foreign Relations a few months after the adoption of NSC-162/2. Unlike other speeches by Dulles where the secretary's rhetoric might have gone further than Eisenhower would have liked, in this speech it was the president himself who personally inserted the two sentences that drew the most attention. In attempting to clarify the logic of the new shift towards Massive Retaliation, Dulles explained: "The way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously and at places with means of its own choosing."²⁰ In a nutshell, this encapsulates the administration's solution to the Great Equation of how to achieve long-term security at a lower cost. In a subsequent article in *Foreign Affairs*, Dulles further detailed the need for an "asymmetric response" relying on America's comparative advantage in navy, air, and atomic weapons to counter the Communist's world more numerous ground forces.²¹

In addition to Massive Retaliation, another side of the asymmetric response proposed in NSC-162/2 was the use of covert operations and economic/military assistance to combat the spread of "Soviet-Communist control" to non-Communist states in the Third World.²² As a recent historical study of US covert actions during the Cold War emphasizes, Dulles's remark on "places and means of our choosing" was as much about nuclear retaliation as it was about the other key component

of the New Look, the use of covert operations against Communist-leaning governments.²³ And during the Project Solarium deliberations, the importance of covert actions was specifically discussed and affirmed by Eisenhower.²⁴ After the adoption of NSC-162/2, Eisenhower also approved NSC-5412, “National Security Council Directive on Covert Operations,” a directive to facilitate the planning and conduct of such missions. In addition to covert operations, the new administration also planned to rely on funneling economic and military aid to support local anti-Communist forces, rather than involving American or NATO troops directly in Third World conflicts.

The New Look’s strategic concept was appealing because it promised to allow the United States to regain the initiative while lowering the cost of Containment. Because the United States could rely on its preferred means (i.e., nuclear weapons or covert operations) rather than having to engage in an expansive conventional military buildup to try to match Soviet means, as NSC-68 recommended, the administration would get “more basic security at less cost.”²⁵ Grand Strategy advocates such as Gaddis praised this approach as an example of “asymmetric strategy”—a strategy that seeks to apply one’s strengths against the weaknesses of the other side, as opposed to the less imaginative symmetrical approach adopted by NSC-68 that called for an across-the-board military buildup. This approach did a better job than the NSC-68 version of Containment in terms of meeting Gaddis’s definition of strategy, that is, a calculated relationship between means and ends: “the New Look, therefore, was an integrated and reasonably efficient adaptation of resources to objectives, of means to ends.”²⁶ Eisenhower’s strategic planning process is considered by many as the gold standard for the making of US strategy, but were the short and long-term results of the New Look as successful as might be expected given the rigorous quality of the strategic planning? And, if not, is it likely that an Emergent Strategy approach would have had better results?

Massive Retaliation, Military Strategy, and Defense Budgeting for the “Long Haul”

The defense strategy component of the New Look shifted the Pentagon’s priorities from investments across the spectrum of conflict to a narrower focus on nuclear weapons as the main deterrent to the further spread of Communism. In order for this new approach to work, however, Eisenhower needed to convince its adversaries that he would quickly escalate a conflict to the level of nuclear war. This strategy of nuclear brinkmanship was a high-risk one, but at least in

its early years the administration had reasons to believe that it would work. The administration deployed tactical nuclear weapons in Western Europe and made it clear to the Soviets that if they initiated a conventional war in that theater, US forces and NATO allies would rely on nuclear weapons to compensate for the Soviet superiority in manpower.²⁷ Similarly, the Eisenhower administration moved nuclear weapons in Korea, and the administration vaguely hinted at the potential use of nuclear weapons in that theater in order to bring about an end to the conflict. Later on, Eisenhower and Dulles also indicated that nuclear weapons might be used if the Communists were to break the newly signed armistice ending the Korean War.²⁸

The first real test of the new defense strategy embodied in NSC-162/2, however, came a year after the adoption of the document in the context of a crisis in the Taiwan Straits. In 1954, the Chinese Communist government started a bombing campaign aimed at taking control of two islands, Quemoy and Matsu, off the coast of Taiwan, thus setting up a potential military showdown with the US-backed Nationalist government in Taipei led by Chiang Kai-Shek. Eisenhower and Dulles considered the defense of these offshore islands as critical for the defense of Taiwan itself from a potential invasion by the Communist forces and showed themselves ready to use the threat of massive nuclear retaliation to protect US interests in the region.

Following a trip to the Far East during the crisis, Dulles came to believe that the Communists were interested in moving beyond the offshore islands and actually invading Taiwan.²⁹ Therefore, he advised the president to use the threat of massive retaliation with atomic weapons to persuade the Chinese to back down. Mirroring the arguments of the New Look strategy, Dulles reiterated that “the need for such use [i.e. of nuclear weapons], to make up for the deficiency in conventional forces, outweighs the repercussive effect of such use upon the free world nations in Europe and the Far East. United States and world public opinion must be prepared.”³⁰ President Eisenhower strongly agreed with this analysis and consequently went on to declare during a news conference in the middle of the Taiwan Strait crisis that he saw no reason “why they [nuclear weapons] shouldn’t be used just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else,” a message also repeated by Vice President Richard Nixon.³¹ Shortly thereafter, China’s premier, Zhou Enlai, declared that his government was ready to negotiate a solution to the escalating crisis with Washington, and thus the Taiwan crisis ended peacefully and with a favorable outcome for the United States.

In the Quemoy and Matsu crisis, the massive retaliation threat apparently

worked as the New Look strategy suggested that it would, thus giving Eisenhower what a biographer called “one of the great victories of his career.”³² In the short run, the new strategic calculus of nuclear deterrence indeed allowed for containing the potential spread of Communism to Taiwan at a relatively low cost.³³ In this instance, therefore, the Grand Strategy model’s expectation for success has been confirmed: Eisenhower’s new addition to US Cold War strategy, the Massive Retaliation doctrine, proved its worth in resolving, at least in the short run, a complicated crisis in East Asia.³⁴ As it turned out, the administration had to resort to the threat of massive retaliation once more in Taiwan a few years later, in 1958. The second Quemoy-Matsu crisis generally followed the same path as the first one. The Chinese Communists started bombing the offshore islands threatening the stability of the Nationalist government, and the United States intervened with a show of force threatening massive retaliation (including senior officials like Dulles hinting at the possible use of nuclear weapons) to persuade Beijing to back down.³⁵ The second crisis was diffused just as the first one had been, but its relatively successful outcome was partly overshadowed by the realization of the disproportionately high risks involved in the threat of nuclear war over territories of marginal importance to US security. This turned out to be only one of a number of thorny problems encountered by the administration in its efforts to implement the grand strategy of New Look / Massive Retaliation and institutionalize it for the long term.

First, technological advances in the power of nuclear weapons and in delivery systems in the years following the adoption of NSC-162/2 undermined the possibility of credibly using the threat of massive nuclear retaliation to deter anything but the most direct threats to the US homeland. The development of the incredibly powerful hydrogen bomb (the “Superbomb”) led to classified studies of the impact of a nuclear exchange that put the potential American casualties in the tens of millions. At the same time, the Soviet launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957 introduced the ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) into the nuclear strategy calculus as a much faster delivery system for nuclear weapons. The US nuclear deterrent, according to a secret study (NSC-5422), had become more vulnerable to a Soviet attack. The study warned that “in the face of the possible nuclear balance in 1956–59, there is serious question whether the U.S., while maintaining maximum nuclear capabilities, can continue to place major reliance thereon.”³⁶ Therefore, in the aftermath of these technological advances in nuclear weapons, the whole concept of Massive Retaliation risked, as historian H. W. Brands put it, “committing national suicide to preserve peripheral interests in outlying areas.”³⁷

A second related problem with Massive Retaliation as a means of containing the spread of Communism was its limited impact on deterring Moscow and Beijing from exploiting indigenous national liberation movements in the Third World for their purposes. The nature of the Cold War contest for power and influence in the Third World moved away from direct military aggression of the kind that would be best suited for deterrence through the threat of a massive military response. Therefore, as strategic analyst Steve Metz has observed, "the New Look was built on a theory of war that was coherent but obsolete . . . In line with American tradition, Eisenhower tended to view strategic history as composed of periods of relative stability upset by aggression and subsequently adjusted by major wars. [Eisenhower] never grasped the significance of limited war."³⁸ Metz probably goes too far in claiming that Eisenhower did not grasp the importance of limited war, but he is right in highlighting a critical problem with the New Look's strategic guidance for the later years of the Eisenhower administration.

Even as the limitations of the New Look became more and more evident, the Eisenhower administration did not modify its initial grand strategy to match the new circumstances.³⁹ By 1955, the president did acknowledge some the limits of the New Look: [the strategy] "offers, of itself, no defense against the losses that we incur through the enemy's political and military nibbling. So long as he abstains from doing anything that he believes would provoke the free world to an open declaration of major war, he need not fear the deterrent."⁴⁰ However, Eisenhower's focus on the long-term sustainability of his grand strategy led him to narrowly focus on limiting budget deficits, even at the risk of ignoring that in light of new technological advances his initial formula for substituting nuclear weapons for investments in conventional weapons might no longer work to assure the overarching goal of Containment. He considered that focusing on limited war, as well as nuclear war, would be "impossible" if the United States hoped to "preserve a sound economy" and avoid transforming itself into a "garrison state."⁴¹ The administration accepted a high risk in the short run (i.e., the threat of nuclear war) and narrowed US options to respond to Cold War crises on the periphery in the hope of saving money in the long term. But did it?

In the short term, Eisenhower succeeded in reshaping the defense spending levels and priorities according to his grand strategic plans. Total national security expenditures declined from 69.5 percent of the federal budget in 1954 to 50.8 percent in 1961, while as a percentage of GDP national security spending fell from 13.1 percent in 1954 to 9.4 percent in 1961.⁴² Implementing some of the recommendations of NSC-162/2 involved a major reshaping of the armed forces:

total manpower decreased by 600,000, with the army shrinking 33 percent from 1.5 million to 1 million soldiers, the navy by about 15 percent, and the marine corps by 20 percent, while the air force gained 60,000 airmen.⁴³ The air force, as the service most involved in nuclear deterrence, increased its share of Pentagon expenditures from 34 percent in fiscal year 1953 to 46.2 percent in fiscal year 1955, while the army and navy / marine corps received about 20–25 percent each in the “mix” of New Look defense spending.⁴⁴ While conventional forces were sharply reduced, the administration enhanced its nuclear strategic programs such as Minutemen, Polaris, B-47, B-52, and B-58.⁴⁵

In the long run, however, the impact of Massive Retaliation and of Eisenhower’s legacy on defense spending and US force structure during the rest of the Cold War is far less successful.⁴⁶ Grand Strategy advocates such as Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman argue that the New Look “set the basic lines for implementing the containment concept that underlay the course of the West for the three decades until the collapse of the Soviet empire,”⁴⁷ but this statement is not persuasive when one examines the evolution of Pentagon’s defense strategy and budgets following Eisenhower. A useful metric to measure the long-term impact of Massive Retaliation is to look at the amount of money spent under the Department of Defense budget category of “Strategic Forces,” compared to the category of “General Purpose Forces.” In 1962, the last budget directly influenced by the New Look, Strategic Forces received \$10.6 billion and General Purpose Forces \$16.6 billion, a ratio of nuclear-to-conventional spending of about 2:3. This would remain the high mark of the budgetary focus on nuclear weapons for the rest of the Cold War. Eisenhower’s successor, John F. Kennedy, explicitly advocated “Flexible Response” in lieu of Massive Retaliation, and therefore he began shifting investment priorities to conventional forces. In just four years, by 1966, Strategic Forces funding decreased by almost a third, to \$6.0 billion, while funding for the General Purpose Forces increased to \$26.4 billion, for a ratio of nuclear-to-conventional investments of approximately 1:4; this number stayed about the same for the rest of the Cold War.⁴⁸ Similarly, the share of the budget for each of the three services shifted during the Kennedy-Johnson years to a ratio of approximately 30–35 percent of the budget each for army, navy, and air force and stayed that way through the end of the Cold War, thus undoing Eisenhower’s prioritization of air power over ground troops.⁴⁹ Moreover, contrary to the New Look Great Equation formula, defense spending for both nuclear and conventional forces increased quite dramatically in later periods despite federal deficits, such as during the years of the Reagan military buildup when investments in

nuclear forces increased over the 1981–1989 period from \$12.2 billion to \$21.3 billion while conventional ones jumped from \$67.8 billion to \$112.3 billion, for a nuclear-to-conventional ratio of 1:5.⁵⁰

Therefore, two conclusions emerge from the budgetary data. First, the numbers show that the mix of forces and the prioritization of investments implemented during the New Look have been significantly altered by future administrations, contrary to what the president attempted to accomplish with his focus on making his approach sustainable “for the long haul.” The Grand Strategy narrative that credits the New Look for providing the financially sustainable path for Containment’s long-term success, thus, does not fit the budgetary data. Second, from the time Eisenhower left office in 1960 to the end of the Cold War in 1989, the United States ran budget deficits in all but one year, yet economic growth during that time proceeded at a good enough pace to allow for a ten-fold increase in GDP, from \$535.1 billion to \$5,570.0 billion.⁵¹ This development contradicts the premises that guided the New Look and its Great Equation, thus calling into question whether the risks of nuclear war incurred during the Eisenhower administration and the self-imposed constraints on investing in limited war capabilities were warranted. In retrospect, it appears evident that future presidents did focus on both types of warfare without either ruining the American economy or overly militarizing American society.⁵²

Would Eisenhower have been better served by an Emergent Strategy approach? From that model’s perspective, the president relied too much on his ability to accurately predict the connection between long-run US economic growth, defense spending levels, and budget deficits. Eisenhower thus made some trade-offs in the short term in the hopes of some long-term benefits (economic growth) that might have been achieved anyways. Similarly, an Emergent Strategy approach would have caused a more thorough rethinking of the doctrine of Massive Retaliation following the close calls in the Quemoy-Matsu crisis and called for shifting course based on the lessons learned from those conflicts in the direction of mitigating future risk of nuclear confrontation by diversifying options to retaliate with non-nuclear forces. Along the same lines, an Emergent Strategy path would have seen the development of ICBMs and of the hydrogen bomb as game-changers for the entire New Look calculus given the vulnerability of the US homeland to retaliation. Lastly, a more flexible approach could have served the president well in his application of his “asymmetric” Containment grand strategy to the growing problem of revolutionary movements in the Third World, the topic of the next section.

Asymmetric Containment in Practice: Covert Operations and Support for Anti-Communist Forces in the Third World

In dealing with situations in the Third World where the threat of massive retaliation might not be appropriate or practical, Eisenhower's New Look grand strategy relied on the use of covert operations and on supporting local anti-Communist forces. In fact, some scholars called covert operations a "central feature of his [Eisenhower's] foreign policy," while others characterized the Eisenhower era as "the heyday of American covert actions."⁵³ The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) expanded its covert activities greatly during the 1950s and was deeply involved in organizing coups d'état against Communist-leaning governments in a number of places, including Iran, Guatemala, and Indonesia. Both Eisenhower and Dulles worried that the spread of Communist-leaning governments in the Third World would enhance Soviet and Chinese influence in the newly independent postcolonial states and thus threaten America's position in the global Cold War. The president wrote in his diaries that "the free world is under threat by the monolithic mass of Communist Imperialism," while Dulles echoed the same worry when he ominously warned that "If Soviet communism is permitted to gobble up other parts of the world one by one, the day will come when the Soviet world will be so powerful that no corner of this world will be safe."⁵⁴ Therefore, Washington needed to contain the spread of Communist governments on the periphery of the East-West conflict, and CIA covert operations seemingly offered an economical way to achieve this.

The Eisenhower administration followed through on its plans for asymmetric containment and launched a number of covert operations during its tenure. The first intervention occurred in Iran, where the CIA (together with their British counterparts in Secret Intelligence Service) helped overthrow the government of the Soviet-leaning prime minister, Mohammad Mossadeq, and replaced him with the pro-Western Shah Reza Pahlavi.⁵⁵ The administration decided to replace Mossadeq, a democratically elected leader, because they regarded some of his actions (such as the development of close connections with the local Communists, the opening of negotiations with Moscow for the sale of oil, and the dissolving of the Iranian parliament) as evidence that Iran was soon going to become a Soviet client state. The CIA conducted a similar intervention in Guatemala a year later. Eisenhower's team was wary of leftist president Jacobo Arbenz Guzman's possible ties to international Communism and of the possible spread of USSR influence in Latin America via Guatemala.⁵⁶ Those fears seemed to be confirmed when Arbenz purchased a weapons shipment from the USSR via Czechoslovakia. This

action triggered the coup d'état that replaced Arbenz with the anti-Communist military dictator Castillo Armas. Unlike in Iran and Guatemala, a similar covert operation to overthrow Sukarno in Indonesia failed to achieve its objective because the regime proved militarily superior to the CIA-backed rebels.⁵⁷ Lastly, it is worth mentioning that Eisenhower also sanctioned the development of an amphibious invasion plan to depose Cuban Communist dictator Fidel Castro, but that ill-fated operation ("Bay of Pigs") would not be launched until the beginning of the Kennedy administration.⁵⁸

In their immediate aftermath, the covert operations in Iran and Guatemala were regarded as "stunning successes," and the administration was proud of the cost-effective way in which it seemingly contained the spread of Soviet influence in two important geopolitical theaters, the Middle East and Central America.⁵⁹ The new leaders of Iran and Guatemala could be counted on to serve the administration's anti-Communist goals, even though they did not share Washington's commitment to democratic governance. Or so it seemed at the time. In the longer term, the success level of the covert operations element of the New Look grand strategy is much more controversial.

First of all, even judged strictly on their short-run goals, subsequent operations following Iran and Guatemala, such as the attempts to overthrow Sukarno and Castro, failed miserably and embarrassed Washington when the CIA involvement was made public. Second, the long-term legacy of the Iran and Guatemala operations turned out to be far more problematic for American foreign policy than initially thought. In Iran, the anti-Americanism spurred by the CIA's contribution to removing Mossadeq plagued US-Iranian relations from the overthrow of the shah in 1979 until the end of the Cold War and beyond. In Central America, US intervention in Guatemala did not deter Soviet influence in future years, and the failed attempt to overthrow Castro planned during Eisenhower's administration arguably led to closer Cuban-Soviet cooperation in the next decade and consequently to an increase in Communist influence in the region. Last, as America's involvement in these operations came to light, the overthrow of democratically elected leaders and the support of authoritarian ones hurt America's image as the defender of the free world and as promoter of human rights, thus poisoning US relations with parts of the Third World for decades to come.

In addition to covert operations, Eisenhower relied on supplying economic and military aid to anti-Communist governments as a complementary policy to deal with the possible spread of international Communism in the Third World. This was the case in places like South Korea, the Philippines, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi

Arabia, and, most controversially, South Vietnam. The president even announced a so-called “Eisenhower Doctrine” vowing to support Middle Eastern states fighting international Communism and acted on that pledge in 1958 by sending aid to the Lebanese government in its fight against Communist-supported political rivals.⁶⁰ Along the same lines, the administration promoted the formation of regional security pacts, such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) or Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), to fight the spread of Communism in the non-Western world. Eisenhower’s legacy on supporting local anti-Communist forces is inextricably tied with his administration’s handling of the crisis in Indochina/Vietnam; interestingly, both admirers and critics of the president point to his actions on this issue to support their arguments.

On the one hand, some scholars praise Eisenhower’s strategy for successfully keeping US troops away from direct involvement in the conflict during his tenure in office.⁶¹ Soon after the adoption of NSC-162/2, the Eisenhower administration debated a variety of military options (including a US bombing campaign and the deployment of American ground troops) to assist the struggling French forces in the battle of Dien Bien Phu. The president, in keeping with the New Look’s emphasis on avoiding potentially expensive US military commitments, rejected the use of force to prevent the Communist Vietnamese forces from defeating the French.

On the other hand, there are also scholars who blame Eisenhower’s New Look for leading him to make political and security commitments to Southeast Asia and to the anti-Communist regime emerging in South Vietnam that ultimately laid the foundation for the fiasco that followed.⁶² Following the Geneva Conference in 1954, which basically established a Communist-controlled area in the north and a Western-leaning state in the south, the Eisenhower administration took a series of steps that arguably constrained the (politically feasible) actions of future presidents on the tragic path to war. First, the administration created a regional defense alliance with South Vietnam as part of the broader SEATO treaty. In Eisenhower’s vision, the members of this alliance would be able to provide most manpower in the case of a conflict, while the United States need only offer airpower support and military advisers. However, SEATO in effect provided a legal commitment in the form of a treaty facilitating the eventual commitment of both US aircraft and also combat troops. Second, the administration publicly committed to stopping the spread of Communism in South Vietnam by relying on the infamous “domino theory” and consequently adopted an NSC directive to “strengthen South Vietnam military forces” and “improve its economic conditions.”⁶³ As historian David Anderson succinctly put it, Eisenhower’s policies

in Indochina were “impeccably consistent with [the] New Look strategy,” and therefore, much as was the case with covert operations, both the short-term successes and the long-term failures stemming from them can be attributed to the Grand Strategy model.⁶⁴

If Eisenhower would have prioritized emergent learning and adaptation as opposed to the long-term design of New Look, America’s policies in dealing with the Third World might have been more successful in the long term. A majority of the historical appraisals of Eisenhower’s legacy criticize his administration’s inability to “distinguish nationalism from communism” and its consequent backing of authoritarian regimes in pursuit of maintaining “a discredit status quo in areas yearning for change and development.”⁶⁵ Even late in his tenure, when Eisenhower hinted at the possible inadequacies of his grand strategic framework to deal with the challenge of nationalist revolutionary movements in the Third World, he nevertheless did not change his New Look grand strategy. As Metz correctly concludes, “stability, anti-communism and nuclear deterrence continued to characterize American strategy” through the end of the administration.⁶⁶ If Eisenhower would not have focused so much on implementing the New Look vision of asymmetric containment, he might have judged the nature of nationalist movements in the Third World more accurately and respond to them more successfully. For example, if the administration had been more focused on adapting to the rapidly evolving political situation in the Third World, it could have cultivated closer relations with nationalist leaders, even left-leaning ones.

All in all, *Project Solarium* did not deliver the kind of successful strategic performance expected by the Grand Strategy model. The initial promise to secure the overarching goal of containing global Communism at a relatively low cost failed to materialize. There are no guarantees that an Emergent Strategy approach would have been more successful during Eisenhower’s time, but this chapter did point some ways in which a focus on short-term adaptation as opposed to the long-term strategic goals of Containment might have improved the administration’s strategic legacy, particularly in its dealings with the Third World. Given the recent admiration for *Solarium* in the foreign policy community, this chapter provides a particularly important challenge to the dominant Grand Strategy school.

Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and Détente

The Containment strategic framework suffered a strong blow to its reputation during the Vietnam War. Many foreign policy analysts regarded that war as having been caused by blind adherence to a flawed, even simplistic, anti-Communist strategy on a global scale. President Richard Nixon and his trusted foreign policy adviser Henry Kissinger came into government convinced of the need not only to get out of Vietnam as inexpensively as possible but also to redesign the principles of American grand strategy shaping Washington's dealings with the challenge of international Communism and with the new geopolitical realities of the 1970s. On numerous occasions, Kissinger expressed his intention to design a more rigorously planned approach to US Cold War grand strategy: "We will never be able to contribute to a stable and creative world order unless we first form some conception of it."¹

The intellectual process of conceptualizing a coherent grand strategy was only half the battle; in order to successfully implement it, Nixon and Kissinger believed, the top policymakers must be insulated from the pressures of government bureaucracy, Congress, and public opinion. Kissinger wrote that in order for the executive to be able to reach its foreign policy goals without hindrance, "some of the key decisions are kept to a very small circle, while the bureaucracy happily continues working away in ignorance of the fact that decisions are being made."² As his former senior aide Peter Rodman recollected, the national security adviser quickly decided that implementing a grand strategy was just as important as designing one and took measures to centralize control over the decision-making process:

I remember his saying during the transition that he wanted to focus on basic strategy and long-range planning, and not get dragged into the "cable-clearing" business . . . Yet, Kissinger soon learned that this operational activity was our foreign policy. "Tactics turn into strategy," as he later told Haldeman. If Kissinger and his staff did not exert themselves to insure that outgoing instructions reflected the president's policies, all the brilliant strategizing in the West Wing would be overtaken by the reality of the policy made by the State Department in its cables.³

In the Nixon White House, consequently, the strategy-making process was highly centralized by Kissinger's small cadre at the National Security Council.⁴ And for some of the most critical negotiations with the Soviet Union, Kissinger set up a private back channel with USSR Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin in order to bypass the State Department altogether.⁵ The administration thus set out to run a coherent and calculated foreign policy guided by a long-term grand strategic view and to consciously minimize influence of competing forces, such as bureaucratic interests or ideological and political pressures from Congress and the general public.⁶ For all these reasons, the Nixon-Kissinger era represents a very good test of the power of the Grand Strategy model to explain the successes and failures of US foreign policy.

Détente and the Nixon Doctrine

Once in office, the Nixon administration followed through on their promise to design a new grand strategy and outlined their plans in a report to Congress titled "US Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace."⁷ Much like Kennan's "Long Telegram" but unlike Eisenhower's New Look, the new grand strategic design was the product of Nixon's and Kissinger's own ideas rather than part of a larger strategic planning exercise. Before coming into government, Kissinger studied and wrote about the shortcomings of a formal strategy-making process: "creativity in planning is confounded with projecting the familiar into the future."⁸ Therefore, he wrote most of this report himself based on close consultations with the president and then submitted it to Congress under Nixon's name. Kissinger's goal for this overarching grand strategic document was twofold. First, the strategy would "serve as a conceptual outline of the President's foreign policy, as a status report, and as an agenda for action." Second, it would "simultaneously guide our bureaucracy and inform foreign governments about our thinking."⁹ Even though this document is less heralded than some of its predecessors, such as NSC-68 or NSC-162/2, grand strategy experts James Goldgeier and Jeremi Suri nevertheless expressed a common view among the scholarly community when they recently praised the administration for the quality of their planning: "Nixon and Kissinger's strategy was a model in its coherence, consistency, and clarity. Articulated most clearly in its first annual foreign policy report . . . the administration's strategy centered on détente, rather than Cold War containment."¹⁰

The report begins by describing the administration's assessment of the differences between the early Cold War context and the "new era of international rela-

tions.” Unlike the 1950s, the “international Communist unity has been shattered”; in the military balance of power, the development of thermonuclear weapons led to a situation where “both sides have recognized a vital mutual interest in halting the dangerous momentum of the nuclear arms race.” These changes from the time Containment was conceived as a grand strategy, the report states, present an opportunity to “get at the causes of crises, to take a longer view, and to help build the international relationships that will provide the framework of a durable peace.”¹¹ As Kissinger declared in 1968, “In the year ahead, the most profound challenge to American policy will be philosophical: to develop some concept of order in a world which is bipolar militarily but multipolar politically.”¹² Therefore, the design of *Détente*, as the Nixon-Kissinger grand strategy of thawing relations with USSR came to be called, rested on this vision of the United States as a member of an increasingly multipolar international system, a shift from the Containment vision of the 1950s and 1960s of two ideologically opposed super-powers facing each other in an inescapable global conflict.

Kissinger believed that one of the main problems with the Containment strategy as it emerged in the early Cold War era was its grounding in an ideological opposition to Communism rather than in balance-of-power principles: “Part of the reason for our difficulties is our reluctance to think in terms of power and equilibrium.”¹³ As an academic well versed in the study of grand strategy, Kissinger designed *Détente* according to the realist principle of balance of power.¹⁴ Much like George Kennan, Kissinger was uncomfortable with the “universalist” rhetoric and actions of previous administrations, and he believed that the US national interest would be better served by a balance-of-power approach. Kennan once remarked that “Henry understands my views better than anyone at State ever has.”¹⁵ Unlike Kennan, however, Kissinger’s positions at a high level in government (national security advisor at first, and later secretary of state) and his formidable skills as a bureaucratic infighter allowed him to control the foreign policy-making process and influence decisions in a way that Kennan never could.

In order to build a “lasting peace” suitable to the new era, the administration designed a grand strategy composed of three major elements: “a peace built on *partnership, strength and willingness to negotiate* is the unifying theme of this report.”¹⁶ The first element, “peace through partnership,” represented a reiteration of the “Nixon Doctrine” announced by the president earlier that year in a speech explaining America’s withdrawal from Vietnam and the process of Vietnamization.¹⁷ As the report adapts this doctrine for a global context, “Its central thesis is that the United States will participate in the defense and development of allies

and friends, but that America cannot—and will not—conceive all the plans, design all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world. We will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest.”¹⁸

Even though this language oversimplifies the Containment strategy of the late 1940s and 1950s, the Nixon Doctrine accurately claimed to represent a departure from the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, a time when “Our policy held that democracy and prosperity, buttressed by American military strength and organized in a worldwide network of American-led alliances, would insure stability and peace.” In the new world of the 1970s, the report argues, “Others now have the ability and responsibility to deal with local disputes which once might have required our intervention.”¹⁹ In other words, America’s vision of global leadership that dominated the early Cold War period, and the burdens associated with it, must be replaced by relying on local allies to shoulder more of the burden of the balance of power. In a classical *realpolitik* move, the administration regarded power considerations as more important than the domestic politics or human rights record of America’s potential Third World allies, similar in some ways to Eisenhower’s earlier efforts to court authoritarian but anti-Communist local partners.

The second principle listed in “A New Strategy for Peace” called for a renewed investment in America’s military strength:

Today, the Soviet Union possesses a powerful and sophisticated strategic force approaching our own. We must consider, too, that Communist China will deploy its own intercontinental missiles during the coming decade, introducing new and complicating factors for our strategic planning and diplomacy. In the light of these fateful changes, the Administration undertook a comprehensive and far-reaching reconsideration of the premises and procedures for designing our forces . . .

For these reasons, this Administration has established procedures for the intensive scrutiny of defense issues in the light of overall national priorities. We have reexamined our strategic forces; we have reassessed our general purpose forces; and we have engaged in the most painstaking preparation ever undertaken by the United States Government for arms control negotiations.²⁰

Last, the third element of *Détente* was a “willingness to negotiate.”²¹ The way to achieve a “structure of peace” was through engaging the Soviet Union in a series of serious negotiations over a wide range of substantive policy issues. Over time,

the hope was that such negotiations would lead to a less adversarial relationship between the United States and the USSR, one akin to those of more traditional great-power rivalries and one that could be managed at a lower cost than the formative period of the Cold War:

The United States, like any other nation, has interests of its own, and will defend those interests. But any nation today must define its interests with special concern for the interests of others. If some nations define their security in a manner that means insecurity for other nations, then peace is threatened and the security of all is diminished. This obligation is particularly great for the nuclear superpowers on whose decisions the survival of mankind may well depend. The United States is confident that tensions can be eased and the danger of war reduced by patient and precise efforts to reconcile conflicting interests on concrete issues. Coexistence demands more than a spirit of good will. It requires the definition of positive goals which can be sought and achieved cooperatively.²²

A closely related idea to this “willingness to negotiate” was the concept of “linkage,” or connecting progress on certain policy issues important to Moscow with progress on the ones important to Washington. The administration regarded such attempts at *quid pro quo* as the quintessential elements of truly deliberate strategic behavior. As Kissinger noted in his memoirs, “The most difficult challenge for a policymaker in foreign affairs is to establish priorities. A conceptual framework—which ‘links’ events—is an essential tool . . . We saw linkage, in short, as synonymous with an overall strategic and geopolitical view. To ignore the interconnection of events was to undermine the coherence of all policy.”²³ A corollary to this idea was the decision to prioritize the achievement of what Kissinger considered America’s top grand strategic priority, stability in the international system, over other concerns, particularly as they related to events in the Third World. As Gaddis observed, “Kissinger had resolved . . . to concentrate on building a stable international order among the superpowers, and then to handle such crises as developed elsewhere according to how they might facilitate, or interfere with, that grand design.”²⁴

“A New Strategy for Peace” concludes by restating that the overarching goal of the United States during the Nixon administration will be “to move the world closer to a durable peace.”²⁵ At the core of the Détente grand strategy, therefore, was a search for a diffusion of tensions with the Soviet Union through negotiations aimed at achieving a more stable world order less prone to conflicts between the two superpowers or their allies. As Kissinger declared a few years later, “The

principal goal of the foreign policy of this administration ever since 1969 has been to set up what the President has called a structure of peace, by which we mean an international system less geared to the management of crises, less conscious of constant eruption of conflict, in which the principal participants operate with a consciousness of stability and permanence.”²⁶ Did the Nixon-Kissinger team achieve this new “structure of peace”? And how successful was *Détente* as America’s grand strategic framework during their tenure? The rest of this chapter addresses these questions by examining three key episodes from the 1970s: the US-Soviet negotiations on arms control and other topics, the opening to China, and the Nixon Doctrine’s impact in a number of Third World crises.

US-Soviet Negotiations, Arms Control, and Linkage

The most significant policy shaped by the new *Détente* grand strategic approach was Washington’s effort to conduct sustained negotiations with Moscow to find compromises across a variety of contentious areas. First, the Nixon administration pushed hard for negotiations with the USSR on nuclear arms control. The most important agreement resulting from the negotiations was the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT). In 1969, President Nixon and Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev signed an interim SALT agreement, followed by an Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty concluded in Moscow in 1972. SALT limited the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) each superpower is allowed to have, while the ABM Treaty capped at 200 “interceptors” the ballistic missile defense programs being developed by both the United States and the USSR and only allowed two missile defense sites for each country. One key characteristic of SALT was its focus on limiting the *quantity* of ICBMs but not limiting possible *qualitative* improvements, such as upgrades to multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicle (MIRV) missiles. Most of the US missiles already had this technology, and therefore SALT allowed the USSR to keep a larger number of ICBMs and SLBMs than the United States in order to reach a rough strategic balance. However, once the quantities were locked in place, the Soviets soon started to improve the quality of their own ICBMs as well by adding MIRV technology.²⁷ This led US officials to worry about the effectiveness of SALT in maintaining the strategic balance and thus set the stage for a new round of (ultimately fruitless) strategic arms negotiations that started in 1972 (“SALT II”) and lasted into the Ford and Carter administrations.

The administration's objectives behind the SALT arms control agreement match two of the grand strategic priorities formulated in "A New Strategy for Peace": first, engaging in direct negotiations in order to build mutual trust and set the stage for a more stable relationship between the two global superpowers; and second, maintaining strategic military strength vis-à-vis the Soviets during a time when the USSR was rapidly increasing its capabilities while the White House was anticipating a large military drawdown imposed on it by Congress in the antimilitary political climate caused by the Vietnam War.²⁸ In the view of Nixon and Kissinger, the ongoing US relative decline in the strategic military balance against the Soviets from unquestioned nuclear superiority to near-parity could be best managed by gaining a commitment from USSR, via the SALT process, to limit their own buildup and halt the arms race. In another sign of how Nixon and Kissinger followed through on their strategic plans, the administration linked progress on the SALT process with a number of other areas of the Cold War, particularly in relation to Soviet actions in the Third World. As Kissinger put it, the Soviets "cannot expect to reap the benefits of cooperation in one area while seeking to take advantage of tension or confrontation elsewhere."²⁹ The most important effort at linkage involved the protracted road to ending the Vietnam War. The administration repeatedly requested Soviet assistance in pressuring Hanoi to end the war in exchange for advancing negotiations in other areas of interest to Moscow, such as trade and arms control. Or, in a different instance, in December 1971 the Nixon administration threatened to cancel the upcoming arms-control summit with Moscow unless the Kremlin pressured its ally India to refrain from invading West Pakistan. Thus, the grand strategy of *Détente* relied on the creative use of various "carrots" and "sticks" to modify the behavior of the Soviet Union by linking together negotiations between different policy areas.

The Nixon administration's highly centralized decision-making process and the use of back channels served to bypass much of the government bureaucracy and allowed Kissinger to implement key elements of *Détente*, but the administration was not entirely successful in preventing Congress from interfering with some of their plans. For example, the Senate hindered Kissinger's efforts at linkage by advancing its own priorities, such as the "Jackson amendment" (named after Democratic Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson) that denied certain important trade benefits to the USSR ("most favored nation" status and access to loans) until the Kremlin allowed higher levels of emigration for their Jewish citizens. A similar difficulty occurred with the increased restrictions on the use of military power imposed by Congress through the War Powers Act, which arguably hindered Nix-

on's ability to make credible threats and deter Soviet support for revolutionary movements in the Third World.³⁰ Despite these obstacles posed by Congress, the Nixon presidency clearly witnessed a shift in Cold War strategy toward *Détente*, and the highly centralized foreign policy-making allowed Kissinger to advance his predetermined policy priorities more so than many of his predecessors or successors. As Kissinger's biographer Niall Ferguson put it, "Kissinger's critics have long found fault with the tactics he employed in executing this strategy, particularly in countries he considered of secondary importance. They have not been able to deny that there was a strategic concept."³¹ Having established that, however, the larger question is the extent to which Kissinger's focus on negotiations, arms control, and linkage led to positive strategic outcomes for the United States during his tenure and beyond. Were these elements of his grand strategy as successful in practice as the Grand Strategy model would predict based on their origins in a coherent design?

The Nixon-Kissinger strategic legacy remains a controversial one, to say the least.³² In terms of the short-run impact of his negotiations with Moscow, the United States indeed reached a milestone agreement in SALT that arguably slowed down the nuclear arms race between the two superpowers at least for a while. The negotiations undertaken as part of *Détente* also probably lowered the risk of nuclear war by diffusing tensions between the United States and the USSR through the fostering of some cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Kissinger's grand strategic acumen and his relentless diplomatic pursuit of his designs deserve credit for these accomplishments. Having said that, *détente*, linkage, and arms control failed to secure *Détente*'s strategic priorities in the 1970s in two major ways.

First, despite Kissinger's efforts at restraining Soviet behavior and at setting up a peaceful "balance of power" structure, the Soviet Union nevertheless continued a pattern of aggressive ideological behavior aimed at spreading its influence around the world. For example, the Kremlin provided continued support for North Vietnam despite repeated requests by Kissinger to pressure its fellow Communist state to sign a peace treaty; not only were the Soviets unhelpful, but they actually increased the military assistance to Hanoi in 1971--1972.³³ The same can be said for the USSR's behavior toward other crises in the Third World throughout the 1970s, such as its support (via Cuba) for Angolan Marxist rebels engineering a coup d'état, for Portuguese Communists, and for its client state Egypt against US ally Israel in 1973. If the overall goal of *Détente* was a more stable balance of power characterized by mutual restraint, then, as Brands concluded, this objective "proved elusive" during the 1970s.³⁴

Second, the administration's arms control agreements turned out to be a short-term fix, at best, for the arms race against the Soviet Union. In fact, Washington's position in the military balance of power deteriorated steadily for the rest of the decade. As Gaddis put it, one pertinent criticism of the administration is that it "acquiesced in the emergence, for the first time since World War II, of a serious rival to the United States in virtually all categories of military competition," and part of the reason for this development was that Nixon and Kissinger "had failed to foresee the extent to which the Russians would stretch the limits of SALT."³⁵ The USSR looked for ingenious ways to continue upgrading their nuclear forces as the Kremlin's ideological hostility to the United States and Cold War mentality shaped their behavior and guided their actions in a more confrontational direction than Kissinger's grand strategic framework anticipated.

Just as the *Détente* grand strategy underestimated the importance of ideas on the Soviet side, it also failed to account for the importance of American values in shaping a successful foreign policy. The administration's vision for a "balance of power" approach designed to sustain a long-term peaceful coexistence with the Communist Soviet Union failed to gain the support of many of its allies in Congress and of other influential Republican politicians, who in turn impeded the implementation of the administration's design and diminished public support for *Détente*. Kissinger believed that the United States could not risk the establishment of his long-term "structure of peace" by pushing for human rights or for changes in the nature of the Soviet political system.³⁶ However, *Détente*'s critics, such as Senator Jackson or then California governor Ronald Reagan, claimed that a successful vision for America's Cold War Strategy must be grounded in the idea that only domestic changes in the USSR would guarantee a sustainable structure of peace. Moreover, Reagan echoed others in accusing Kissinger of mistakenly focusing on arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union at a time when the USSR was increasing its military and strategic nuclear arsenals relative to the United States. Defending Kissinger against this critique, some grand strategy experts consider *Détente* a "partial success" because it "bolstered America's deteriorating posture at minimal material cost" and thus reached the coherence between means and ends widely regarded as the mark of good statecraft.³⁷ However, the focus on successfully managing American decline and merely navigating a multipolar world was rightly considered by the American public as a losing strategy because it betrayed Washington's Cold War mission of defending global freedom by pursuing the ultimate defeat of the Soviet Union and of its Communist ideology. In conclusion, despite its careful designs as a grand strategy, in the long

run the Détente with USSR (manifested through negotiations, arms control, and linkage) failed to bring lasting successes to US foreign policy.

Triangular Relations and the Opening to China

Unlike the ultimate failure of US-Soviet détente, the “opening to China” orchestrated by the Nixon administration left a positive strategic legacy both during its tenure and in the longer-term. In what was widely regarded as one of the more successful grand strategic moves of the Cold War, Kissinger embarked on a secret effort to establish diplomatic relations with Mao’s Communist regime, the first step toward the normalization of relations between the United States and the People’s Republic of China (PRC). This action has since been regarded as an extraordinary diplomatic coup because it capitalized on the tensions between Moscow and Beijing and put Washington in a position to take advantage of the emerging rift between the two most powerful Communist countries.³⁸

In the short term, the opening to China virtually eliminated the need to prepare for a global war against a united Communist bloc, allowed the administration more leverage in its negotiations with the USSR, and made it much easier to prevent the spread of USSR influence in Asia. The move essentially transformed the Cold War geopolitical picture in East Asia away from bipolar rivalry between two blocs toward the administration’s grand strategic goal of a more stable multipolar structure; better yet, it did so without major costs for the United States. The opening also arguably lessened the chance of war in the Taiwan Strait, even though tensions between Beijing and Taipei remained a continuous threat to peace in East Asia and thus required an ongoing US military presence in the region.

In contrast to these positive outcomes, there were two issues in which the opening to China failed to achieve important objectives of the administration. Despite efforts to get Beijing to pressure its North Vietnamese client government into a quicker end to the Vietnam War, China did very little on that front and continued to support Hanoi. Another area where US-Chinese cooperation did not achieve much was diffusing tensions on the Korean Peninsula. In the long term, the most important strategic consequence of the opening to China was the establishment of trade relations between the two countries, the first step in a very intricate linking of the US and Chinese economies over the next few decades, with mutual trade and investment flows on the order of hundreds of billions of dollars. The Nixon administration deserves some credit for this success, even

though economic trade considerations were a secondary motive and paled in contrast with the geopolitical motivation behind their opening to China.

How did Grand Strategy contribute to these outcomes? This diplomatic move was quintessentially Kissingerian in its conception, as it relied on a view of realist power considerations as being the main determinant of China's foreign policy and on a multipolar balance of power as the organizing principle of regional and global stability. Before joining the government, Kissinger hinted at the idea of starting a dialogue with China: "In a subtle triangle of relations between Washington, Peking, and Moscow, we improve the possibilities of accommodations with each as we increase our options towards both."³⁹ Later on, in his memoirs, he explained further his thought process on this issue: the US needed to "free our diplomacy from the dead weight of two decades," the period of the Containment grand strategy that regarded Communism largely as a monolith. Once that happens, then "each Communist superpower would have greater inducement to deal with us constructively" and our options toward them would be "greater than their options toward each other."⁴⁰

But even as the Grand Strategy model clearly receives important support in the case of the successful opening to China, it is also important to highlight that the process by which this outcome came about was quite haphazard and improvisational in many ways. The establishment of US-PRC relations was the end product of a number of secret overtures through the diplomats of different countries such as Pakistan and Romania, all culminating with visits by Kissinger and then Nixon to the mainland to meet Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai. As a harbinger of the opening to China, the Nixon administration engaged in limited diplomatic communications in its first two years in office via the US and Chinese ambassadors in Poland. The administration relaxed travel restriction to the mainland in 1971, a step that facilitated the famous "ping-pong diplomacy" in which US athletes traveled in April of that year to the mainland to play against their Chinese counterparts. Such small steps pointed to a thaw in the relations between the two states, but it was Kissinger's highly secretive trip in July 1971 to meet with Zhou Enlai that sent shock waves through the international system when news of that encounter was dramatically announced by President Nixon.

Following a series of unsuccessful efforts to set up a meeting in previous years, Mao invited Nixon to visit China through a letter sent in May 1971. Kissinger convinced the Chinese leaders to allow him to visit first, in order to prepare the meeting of the two heads of state. The major impediment from the Chinese side was US support for Taiwan. Beijing initially asked for the removal of the US

troops from Taiwan to be the first issue to be discussed and also held that normalization of relations would require Washington to accept that Taiwan is a part of China.⁴¹ Nixon and Kissinger did not agree to either, both for strategic reasons and out of fear of a domestic political backlash from pro-Taiwan members of Congress. However, they artfully negotiated a compromise with Beijing, and during Nixon's visit in 1972 the two parties released the "Shanghai Communiqué" outlining an ambiguous language by which the Washington acknowledged "that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China."⁴² This language set up the foundation for the eventual normalization of relations between the two countries, even as Washington continued to support Taiwan militarily. To sum up, despite fitting very well with the priorities of the administration's grand strategy, this policy success contained a significant element of contingency, as Kissinger himself candidly admitted in his memoirs: "In retrospect all successful policies seem preordained. Leaders like to claim prescience for what has worked, ascribing to planning what usually starts as a series of improvisations. It was no different with the new China policy. The new Administration had the general intention of making a fresh start. But in all candor it had no precise idea how to do this and it had to take account of domestic realities."⁴³

On balance, the opening to China represented a remarkably successful policy initiative coming out of Kissinger's vision for a multipolar world order guided by balance of power considerations, and as such it remains one of the best Cold War examples of the Grand Strategy model contributing to a successful foreign policy outcome. Having said that, it is also important to highlight that the objectives set by the administration for this move were accomplished only in part and that the implementation of the policy itself required some emergent adaptation along the way. Lastly, it is perhaps ironic that the opening to China contributed most to the long-term national interest of the United States due to the economic gains from expanded trade and investment relations, a topic Kissinger was not particularly interested in, rather than in the arena of geopolitics that animated his strategic thinking. The Communist regime in Beijing could not be cajoled into helping the United States extricate itself more successfully from Vietnam, nor was the PRC especially helpful in working with the United States to promote a "stable order" in East Asia and beyond. However, the economic interdependence that started with Nixon's trip to China set the foundation for a generally cooperative (if not necessarily friendly) relationship between Washington and Beijing that continued to serve the US national interest long after the Cold War

considerations that spurred this diplomatic move disappeared. Not until Donald Trump did a US president express great doubts about the wisdom of integrating China into the global economy. Previous presidents regarded the sustained trade deficits between Washington and Beijing as an unfortunate but ultimately manageable problem, and they saw the benefits of mutual US-China economic cooperation as worthwhile in both geopolitical and economic terms.

The Nixon Doctrine and Partnerships in the Third World

In addition to triangular diplomacy, the other major element of the Nixon-Kissinger grand strategic design for a more sustainable world order was the support of Third World dictators as “regional policemen” in charge of preserving local stability in order to avoid the need for costly US involvement. A balance-of-power approach based on *realpolitik* calculations became the organizing principle for US foreign policy decision-making, rather than a willingness to bear the financial and military burdens of leading the “free world” in the fight against Soviet expansionism and international Communism, as Truman or Kennedy vowed in earlier decades. The view of Communism as a global ideological threat was not held by Nixon and Kissinger, who focused on the national interests of states rather than their internal forms of government. Under Nixon, Washington was more than willing to work with allies without regard to their democratic credentials, and there was far less concern with promoting democracy, economic development, and human rights than in previous administrations. Previous presidents reluctantly supported anti-Communist authoritarian leaders at times, but those instances were exceptions rather than the rule; the Nixon Doctrine, on the other hand, was part of a purposefully designed grand strategy to reduce America’s global footprint by narrowly defining the national interest around considerations of power and geopolitics and consequently diminishing to the point of irrelevance the role of American values in the conduct of the Cold War. As Kissinger plainly stated in his memoirs, “Our objective was to purge our foreign policy of all sentimentality.”⁴⁴

First of all, the Nixon Doctrine predictably impacted the events that led to its initial formulation: America’s efforts at Vietnamization and its eventual withdrawal from the Vietnam War. The administration’s dual goals were, first, to achieve “peace with honor” via a negotiated settlement with Hanoi that allowed for the withdrawal of US troops and, second, to leave behind a South Vietnamese government strong enough to protect itself against North Vietnam. Kissinger’s intense negotiations with his North Vietnamese counterpart, Le Duc Tho, suc-

cessfully concluded in January 1973 with a peace deal, though not before the United States tried to increase its leverage by launching massive and controversial bombing campaigns against the North Vietnamese as well as against neighboring states Cambodia and Laos. The administration ended the war and brought home the US troops from South Vietnam, but it could not accomplish its second objective. A North Vietnamese attack easily overran the US-backed South Vietnamese government only two years later and unified the country under Communist rule.

Second, the administration implemented the Nixon Doctrine in its dealings with a number of Third World dictators during its time in office. In Africa, Nixon and Kissinger cultivated close relations with the apartheid regime in South Africa in an effort to maintain stability in the postcolonial era and diminish the possible influence of Soviet-supported or Communist-leaning new black-majority governments in places like Mozambique or Angola.⁴⁵ In the Middle East, the administration supported the shah of Iran as a pillar of regional stability, and it provided military support to the Iranian leader to defeat a left-leaning insurgency in Oman.⁴⁶ In South and Southeast Asia, Washington backed Indonesian strongman Suharto and, more consequentially, the Pakistani regime of Yahya Khan as a balance against USSR-friendly India despite the abhorrent human rights violations committed by Khan during the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war, including the massacre of his own people.⁴⁷

Third, the Nixon Doctrine also provided the strategic rationale for Washington's support of Latin American military dictators during the 1970s. Nixon and Kissinger strongly backed the rulers of Brazil and Argentina in their efforts to eliminate domestic political opponents, often by violent means. Some of the opposition to the military dictatorships drew inspiration and support from the Soviet Union and Cuba, but others were indigenous and democratic-minded reformers. Regardless of the distinction between the two, the administration provided support to military dictators in the name of assuring regional stability; simply put, Nixon and Kissinger's strategy assumed that authoritarian leaders were the best way to guarantee US influence at a modest cost.⁴⁸ As Nixon stated it, "I will never agree with the policy of downgrading the military in Latin America. They are power centers subject to our influence."⁴⁹ In the case of Chile, the administration infamously went one step further than merely supporting an incumbent military dictator. With the help of Brazil, the United States contributed covertly to the overthrow of Salvador Allende, a Communist-leaning but democratically elected leader, and then strongly supported the rise to power and subsequent tenure of another military dictator, General Augusto Pinochet.

In the short run, the policies shaped by the Nixon Doctrine allowed the administration to score some modest gains but also led to some real failures. In the case of Vietnam, the administration reached a peace agreement, albeit at the cost of several years of continued fighting that did little to prevent the North from conquering the South once US troops left. Moreover, the US escalation in Cambodia and Laos contributed to the further destabilization of Southeast Asia and hurt the image of US foreign policy both globally and with a significant part of the American public. The same mixed bag characterizes the results of the Nixon Doctrine in Latin America: Kissinger's support for military dictators might have enabled them to stay in power and avoid short-term instability from Communist forces, but this support, particularly in Chile, came at a great cost in terms of America's standing in the global war of ideas against the Soviet Union and also soured relations with the civil society in Latin America. In the eyes of many, including domestic supporters of human rights on both the left and the right of the political spectrum, the extensive partnerships with dictators put America on the wrong side of freedom and democracy in the Cold War. Pursuing a clear grand strategy allowed Kissinger to stay focused on his main priority for US foreign policy, the maintenance of stability at a relatively low cost, but it also prevented him from showing more flexibility and perhaps learning from some of the domestic criticisms raised by both liberals like Jimmy Carter and conservatives like Ronald Reagan against his "amoral" policies.⁵⁰ As it turned out, this failure of adaptability eventually doomed the Nixon Doctrine in the late 1970s and beyond.

In the long term, the legacy of the Nixon-Kissinger quest to secure US interests at a reduced cost through "partnerships," as outlined in the third principle of "A New Strategy for Peace," is one of failure. Washington's support of myriad dictators in the Third World not only failed to keep the lid on those conflicts in places such as Angola but also led to the rise of anti-Americanism among their publics. The United States thus found itself regarded as a defender of oppression by civil society groups in the Third World, and Washington's policies made it easier for the Soviets and their Communist allies to make inroads with these activists. This was particularly the case in Latin and Central America, where US support for military dictatorships decreased rather than enhanced America's long-term influence in the Western Hemisphere when these states overthrew their dictators in future decades and became democratic. In Iran, the United States' unconditional support for the shah left Washington incapable of shaping the events following the Iranian Revolution. Decades of US-Iranian hostile relations might have been avoided if the United States had supported the secular and

pro-democracy opposition to the shah in a way that steered the Iranian political system away from both the monarchy and the Islamist theocracy of the mullahs.

In the Nixon-Kissinger era, therefore, the two statesmen followed the tenets of the Grand Strategy model more closely than many of their predecessors or successors, yet the strategic outcomes have been quite disappointing. How do Grand Strategy proponents explain these unsatisfactory outcomes? Some advocates of this model blame Kissinger for failing to anticipate some of the major historical shifts at the time, such as the rise of a global human rights movement; for his overly secretive style that alienated the government bureaucracy; and for his disregard of domestic politics and Congress.⁵¹ These are all fair criticisms of Kissinger, but this defense of the Grand Strategy model also reveals some of the inherent, and perhaps insurmountable, difficulties that even the most intellectually sophisticated and bureaucratically savvy American statesmen have to face in designing and implementing a grand strategy successfully.

Could an Emergent Strategy approach have led the Nixon-Kissinger team to better results? In at least one regard, there is some reason to believe so. An emergent strategy allows for more input from domestic politics, and consequently it leads statesmen to pay more attention to the values and ideas that traditionally infuse the rhetoric of American foreign policy. If the disconnect with those aspects of successful foreign policy-making was one of the causes for Kissinger's failures, then an emergent approach might have diminished that problem. And, of course, if the administration had devoted more energy to understanding a fast-changing international environment and less to long-term objectives such as attempting to reach a sustainable peace, one could argue that they might have had more success. In the end, both the Carter and Reagan administrations adopted significantly different Cold War strategies than *Détente*, thus rendering largely irrelevant Kissinger's grand strategic goal to leave in place a long-term "structure of peace."

Ronald Reagan and the End of the Cold War

Ronald Reagan's role in bringing about the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union and a successful end to the Cold War represents a particularly well-suited case study to explore the competing expectations of the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy paradigms. Some of the foremost strategic studies experts have recently made the case that the Reagan administration designed a grand strategy to defeat the Soviet Union and successfully implemented it throughout the presidency, while others contend that Reagan's contributions to the end of the Cold War are owed more to his emergent learning, adaptations, and improvisations later in his presidency than to the strategic planning conducted in his first term.¹

Encapsulating the arguments of the first group of scholars, Tom Mahnken pithily writes: "Reagan and a handful of his close advisors formulated a coherent strategy toward the Soviet Union between 1981 and 1983, and implemented that strategy consistently throughout the remainder of his eight years in office."² Reagan's planned grand strategy is best captured in two National Security Decision Directives (NSDD) adopted in May 1982 and January 1983, respectively: NSDD 32, "US National Security Strategy," and NSDD 75, "US Relations with the USSR." Reagan scholar Paul Lettow later described these documents as "the fundamental, authoritative statements of US national security policy during the Reagan administration."³ Reagan's strategy, Francis Marlo observed, was a "fundamentally different American grand strategy" than the Containment framework because it sought to "roll back the Soviet sphere of influence and undermine the bases of the Soviet state."⁴ Therefore, as Will Inboden concluded, "The primary strategic assumption undergirding the entire Reagan Cold War policy architecture was that the United States should try to defeat the Soviet Union rather than coexist with it."⁵

However, other scholars disagree with this narrative focused on Reagan's strategic plans and instead attribute Reagan's foreign policy successes in the last phase of the Cold War to the president's strategic improvising.⁶ Gaddis argues that the

Reagan administration “put forward no comprehensive strategy for ending the Cold War. That would emerge only gradually, in response to what happened after Reagan entered the White House.”⁷ Similarly, Suri conducted a review of the literature on the end of the Cold War and concluded that “Reagan did not have a ‘plan’ of any sort to end the Cold War. Instead, he had grown apprehensive, like his Soviet counterparts, that superpower tensions were spiraling out of control.”⁸ Most recently, this argument is presented in detail in a new book by James Graham Wilson suggestively titled *The Triumph of Improvisation*: “No master plan explains either the developments in Eastern Europe and east Germany or the response to those developments in the West . . . Adaptation, improvisation, and engagement by individuals in power ended almost a half century of cold war and the specter of a nuclear holocaust . . . In the last years of the conflict, improvisation mattered more than any master plan.”⁹

There is, therefore, a heated scholarly debate regarding the extent to which Reagan’s most consequential and successful foreign policy decisions were shaped by his early grand strategic plans. In order to answer this question, this chapter starts by presenting the elements of the administration’s grand strategy as outlined in NSDD 32 and NSDD 75 and then analyzes three policy areas of great significance for Reagan’s strategic legacy: military buildup, the Strategic Defense Initiative, and economic warfare against the USSR, the “Reagan Doctrine” of supporting anti-Communist forces in an effort to both roll back the Soviet empire abroad and undermine its legitimacy at home, and finally the US-Soviet arms control negotiations and the easing of tensions leading to the winding down of the Cold War in Reagan’s last years in office.

Reagan’s Grand Strategy Documents: NSDD 32 and NSDD 75

President Reagan came into office with very strong beliefs about America’s role in the world and about the Soviet Union. His worldview resembled the idealist, Truman-era strategic vision much more than the deviations from the early version of Containment, such as Détente, that followed the Vietnam War. In its first years the Reagan administration redesigned America’s Cold War strategy in ways that went beyond mere containment and resonated with the more ambitious ideas of NSC-68, such as the rollback of Communism. Reagan’s early rhetoric reverted back to the Trumanesque, idealist vision of the United States as leader of the forces for freedom engaged in a global struggle against the repressive forces of Communism represented by the Soviets and their proxies. In fact, Reagan often

invoked Truman in his speeches: "Harry Truman once said that ultimately 'our security and the world's hopes for peace and human progress lie not in measures of defense or in the control of weapons but in the growth and expansion of freedom and self-government.' And tonight, we declare anew to our fellow citizens of the world: freedom is not the sole prerogative of a chosen few; it is the universal right of all God's children . . . Our mission is to nourish and defend freedom and democracy and to communicate these ideas everywhere we can."¹⁰

Adopted midway through the first term of his presidency, NSDD 32 and NSDD 75 built on Reagan's ideas and used them as the foundation to design a grand strategy for fighting and winning the Cold War.¹¹

The first document, "US National Security Strategy," was specifically designed to establish "a definitive strategic rationale and agenda to guide all aspects of national security policy."¹² This strategic plan originated in a study paper, NSSD 1-82, conducted by an interagency group and presented to the National Security Council (NSC) in April 1982 for debate; the president formally approved a shorter version of the original study, titled NSDD 32, in May of that year. In unambiguous language, NSDD 32 started from the principle that the overall objective of US national security policy was to "contain and reverse the expansion of Soviet control and military presence throughout the world."¹³ Therefore, in addition to Containment, the administration would also move to destabilize the Communist system both in the USSR and around the globe. The plan called on the United States and its allies to "weaken the Soviet alliance system by forcing the USSR to bear the brunt of its economic shortcomings, and to encourage long-term liberalizing and nationalist tendencies within the Soviet Union and allied countries."¹⁴ In order to achieve these goals, the plan called on the US government to implement "an interlocking set of strategies that principally include the following: diplomatic; information; economic/political; military."¹⁵ The rest of the document elaborated the military strategy component, with the understanding that subsequent studies would flesh out the nonmilitary components.

In the section on military strategy, the document started from the premise that "The growth of Soviet military power over the last decade has called into question the ability of the United States and its allies to deter attack by the Soviet Union and its allies across the spectrum of conflict."¹⁶ The document warned that the loss of nuclear superiority required the United States to increase its investments in conventional forces in order to make up for this changing nuclear balance, thus setting the stage for the upcoming Reagan military buildup: "In order to close the gap between strategy and capabilities, the U.S. must undertake

a sustained and balanced force development program.”¹⁷ In addition to the modernization of conventional forces, NSDD 32 also declared that “The modernization of our strategic nuclear forces and the achievement of parity with the Soviet Union shall receive first priority in our efforts to rebuild the military capabilities of the United States.”¹⁸ Lastly, the document called for investments in ballistic missile defense technology which, while admittedly not likely to be “impenetrable,” might nevertheless “reduce Soviet perceptions of advantages to be gained by initiating a nuclear attack.”¹⁹

In its analysis of the Soviet Union’s strategic circumstances and likely future moves, the document, while pointing out some USSR weaknesses, nevertheless expected an intense geopolitical and military competition: “The key military threats to U.S. security during the 1980s will continue to be posed by the Soviet Union and its allies and clients. Despite increasing pressures on its economy and the growing vulnerabilities of its empire, the Soviet military will continue to expand and modernize.”²⁰ The administration’s analysis highlighted some of the USSR’s economic weaknesses but concluded that major economic reforms inside the Soviet Union were unlikely and that Kremlin leaders would continue to invest in military programs despite these economic concerns:

Living standards in the USSR will probably stagnate owing to the growing defense burden and inefficient investment practices. As Soviet citizens perceive a decline in the quality of life, productivity growth will also decline unless dramatic economic reforms are introduced—an unlikely prospect. These problems will force Moscow to make difficult choices among priorities. While it will be increasingly difficult for it to sustain growth in military spending, the primacy of the military will continue in Soviet planning . . .

None of the current contenders to succeed Brezhnev seems likely to depart radically from established Soviet priorities. The military establishment has great influence on current Soviet policy formulation and that influence may increase during a succession struggle. As a result, Brezhnev’s immediate successors are unlikely to change the present emphasis on defense spending or decrease their efforts to project Soviet power.²¹

Lastly, the document addressed the issue of the USSR’s strategy in potential arms control negotiations: “Parallel to Moscow’s military effort, the Soviets will try to pursue an arms control dialogue with the West. The strategic arms control process in particular remains important as a means of constraining military competition with the US. A major Soviet motivation in this dialogue has been to

reduce the possibility of a US technological breakthrough that might jeopardize Moscow's strategic nuclear status . . . The Soviets probably want to preserve the ABM treaty without amendments for at least the next few years. They are concerned that the US could eventually deploy effective ABM systems."²²

Shortly after the adoption of this secret directive, Reagan offered the public a glimpse of the new grand strategy. In his famous "Westminster speech" before the British Parliament, he called on the West to capitalize on the manifest political and economic failures of the Communist systems and wage a "campaign for democracy." In the long term, the "march of freedom and democracy will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history."²³ Thus, Reagan talked forcefully about defeating the Soviet Union, not just settling for a bipolar order with the Soviets as the other superpower in a "balance of power" arrangement.²⁴ More so than many of his predecessors, his grand strategy reflected a vision for the United States' unique role and responsibility as the "last, best hope of man on earth."²⁵ The Soviet Union, in one of Reagan's immortal phrases, represented an "evil empire" that the United States needed to oppose "with all our might," Reagan told the National Association of Evangelicals in 1983.²⁶ He saw the United States as the leader of the free world, not just another great power engaged in a geopolitical struggle.

One of the key intellectual architects of the Westminster speech was NSC Director for Soviet Affairs Richard Pipes, a Harvard historian who was a powerful critic of Détente and a proponent of a much tougher anti-Communist strategy.²⁷ Later that year, Pipes was tasked with drafting NSDD 75, a follow-up paper to NSDD 32, which would further detail the Reagan administration's grand strategy with respect to the Soviet Union. In his memoirs, Pipes writes about the differences between what he perceived to be Reagan's views and those held by many State Department officials at the time. Pipes argued that "the policy of containment, which remained one of the foundation stones of US-Soviet policy, had long been overtaken by events."²⁸ The Soviets had found ways to expand their influence via nonmilitary means all around the world (in Ethiopia, Angola, North Korea, North Vietnam, Cuba, and Nicaragua), and the West had been unable to counter these moves; moreover, when the United States tried to use military force to stanch Communist expansion in Vietnam, it proved very costly and impossible to do. Pipes concluded that "it was a hopeless undertaking to try to prevent its further spread at the periphery: one had to strike at the very heart of Soviet imperialism, its system." The foundations of Détente and of George Kennan's Containment were based on the notion that the United States should

attempt to influence Soviet *behavior*. On the contrary, Pipes explained, “Following what I sense to be the President’s belief, I, by contrast, argue that behavior is a consequence of the *system* and that our policies aim at modifying the system as a prerequisite for changed behavior.”²⁹

NSDD 75 lists three main objectives for America’s Cold War strategy:

- To contain and over time reverse Soviet expansionism by competing effectively on a sustained basis with the Soviet Union in all international arenas—particularly in the overall military balance and in geographical regions of priority concern to the United States. This will remain the primary focus of US policy toward the USSR.
- To promote, within the narrow limits available to us, the process of change in the Soviet Union toward a more pluralistic political and economic system in which the power of the privileged ruling elite is gradually reduced. The US recognizes that Soviet aggressiveness has deep roots in the internal system, and that relations with the USSR should therefore take into account whether or not they help to strengthen this system and its capacity to engage in aggression.
- To engage the Soviet Union in negotiations to attempt to reach agreements which protect and enhance US interests and which are consistent with the principle of strict reciprocity and mutual interest. This is important when the Soviet Union is in the midst of a process of political succession.³⁰

A key paradigm shift at the grand strategy level, Pipes recalls, revolved around the second paragraph, which noted that the Soviet internal system needed to be changed, not merely Soviet behavior. The qualifier “within the narrow limits” was added at the insistence of the State Department, despite his objections, but nevertheless he regarded this whole paragraph as a “great victory over State and the conventional wisdom of the Sovietological community.”³¹ This particular element of the strategy, *reversing* Soviet gains by competing in all international arenas, was reinforcing the Rollback idea present in NSDD 32. According to a memo written by National Security Adviser William Clark, this shift represented “a new objective of U.S. policy. The basic premise behind this new approach is that it makes little sense to seek to stop Soviet imperialism externally while helping to strengthen the regime internally.”³²

In order to implement the three elements of the strategy listed above, NSDD 75 articulated a number of policies across three policy arenas: military, economic,

and political. First, the document stated that “The US must modernize its military forces—both nuclear and conventional—so that Soviet leaders perceive that the US is determined never to accept a second place or a deteriorating military posture . . . US military technology advances must be exploited, while controls over transfer of military related/dual-use technology, products, and services must be tightened.”³³ Secondly, on the economic front, the administration sought to limit Soviet access to materials that could be use in their military buildup, and also to “avoid subsidizing the Soviet economy or unduly easing the burden of Soviet resource allocation decisions,” partly by working closer with America’s European allies to limit East-West trade.³⁴ Thirdly, NSDD -75 codified the President’s offensive in the realm of the “war of ideas” against the Soviet Union: “U.S. policy must have an ideological thrust which clearly affirms the superiority of U.S. and Western values of individual dignity and freedom, a free press, free trade unions, free enterprise, and political democracy over the repressive features of Soviet Communism.”³⁵

At the same time, however, the administration also integrated into their Roll-back vision the support of anti-Communist forces in the Third World even in cases where such actors lacked a commitment to democracy or human rights: “The U.S. must rebuild the credibility of its commitment to resist Soviet encroachment on U.S. interests. and those of its Allies and friends, and to support effectively those Third World states that are willing to resist Soviet pressures or oppose Soviet initiatives hostile to the United States, or are special targets of Soviet policy.”³⁶ This policy was further confirmed later on in what some pundits called the Reagan Doctrine—the assistance of both democratic-minded human rights activists inside the Soviet bloc and of anti-Communist insurgents around the world in the fight against pro-Soviet, Communist-leaning governments.³⁷

Military Buildup, the Strategic Defense Initiative, and Economic Warfare

The Reagan administration implemented its grand strategic plans most evidently in the areas of defense spending, military competition, and economic pressure directed at the Soviet Union. The military buildup undertaken in the 1980s led to a major increase in the overall level of defense expenditures: the annual Pentagon budget steadily increased from \$142 billion in 1980 to over \$287 billion by 1988.³⁸ The administration launched a modernization program across the board, in both conventional and nuclear capabilities: among other weapon

systems, the US military procured 100 MX (later Peacekeeper) intercontinental ballistic missiles, 6 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines armed with 96 Trident D5 submarine-launched ballistic missiles, 3,000 air-launched cruise missiles, and 100 B-1 bombers.³⁹ The overall size of the navy increased from 454 to about 600 ships.⁴⁰ The administration also introduced new sensors and surveillance systems, as well as precision guided munitions, in order to shift the focus of military competition to an area of US competitive advantage—computing, information technology, and high-tech systems—where the Soviets would have difficulty matching US efforts effectively.⁴¹

The crown jewel of Reagan's military buildup, however, was the \$23 billion Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). This national ballistic missile defense program was launched mostly due to the president's intense commitment to this concept, despite the misgivings of some members of the administration and of Congress.⁴² Reagan had two main goals for the SDI program, one of which fit well with the NSDD 75 grand strategy and one of which did not. The first was to gain the upper hand in the nuclear strategic arms race against the Soviet Union by forcing them to divert massive amounts of money into their own ballistic missile defense program or to attempt another massive intercontinental ballistic missile buildup, something the CIA estimated that Moscow could hardly achieve without further undermining their already fragile economy.⁴³ The second reason, the one that by many accounts animated the president the most and also the one that Reagan officially stated at the launch of the program, was to find a technological solution that would subsequently allow for the elimination of nuclear weapons: "I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their greatest talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete."⁴⁴ In the president's mind, once the United States developed the means to stop an incoming nuclear-armed ballistic missile, he could share the technology with the Soviets and thus eliminate the need for nuclear deterrence and "mutual assured destruction," which in turn could lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons altogether.⁴⁵ This goal of nuclear abolitionism, much as it animated the president, was most clearly not part of the planned grand strategy outlined in NSDD 75 or NSDD 32.

In addition to military buildup, the Reagan administration launched a series of other measures aimed at increasing the strain on Soviet finances in order to reduce their ability to threaten militarily the United States or its allies and, in the long run, to weaken the Communist Party rule both in Eastern Europe and

in the USSR itself. The administration imposed sanctions on Poland to force the Soviets to bail the Warsaw government out of its financial troubles, and it used sanctions and embargoes to deny the USSR access to Western technology. The Reagan team also tried and partly succeeded in persuading NATO allies to limit technology and hard currency transfers to the Soviet Union for a gas pipeline connecting Siberia and Western Europe. Lastly, the administration worked with the Saudis to lower the price of oil, thus further reducing Soviet access to hard currency from their oil exports, and it even engaged in industrial sabotage to harm the Soviet economy.⁴⁶

What were the short-term and long-term results of the administration's implementation of these grand strategic plans to increase the military competition and to put economic pressure on the Soviet system? On the one hand, some scholars regard these policy initiatives as major factors in bringing about the eventual demise of the Soviet Union. Peter Schweizer offered the most forceful treatment of this argument, drawing a direct link between the implementation of Reagan's grand strategy and Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev's decisions to shift resources from the military toward domestic priorities and to launch the major politicoeconomic domestic reforms that ultimately led to the end of the USSR.⁴⁷ Mahnken adopts a more cautionary tone but points in the same direction: "A persuasive case can be made that the Cold War ended because US strategy forced the Soviet government to implement sweeping change in a bid to save the communist regime."⁴⁸ Inboden also noted how, by "using his NSC to protect and promote SDI, he [Reagan] achieved the outcome he desired of a strategic surprise that led directly to the end of the Cold War."⁴⁹

Part of the evidence for this conclusion comes from the comments of former high-level Soviet officials who confirmed the impact of the military buildup and the SDI announcement on their subsequent actions. At times, Gorbachev appeared clearly concerned about the possibility of SDI putting the Soviets at a "permanent strategic disadvantage," and he was equally worried about getting drawn into "an arms race . . . that we will lose."⁵⁰ Former Soviet ambassador to Washington Anatoly Dobrynin recalled in his memoirs that "our leadership was convinced that the great technical potential of the United States had scored again and treated Reagan's statement as a real threat."⁵¹ Other studies agree with this conclusion; as summarized by Jeremi Suri in a literature review on the end of the Cold War, "Most writers now agree that the Soviet Union faced difficult economic choices at the very moment when Reagan promised to widen the stra-

tegic competition between the superpowers . . . Constructing a response to SDI would have required difficult domestic sacrifices at a time when Soviet society was already spread very thin.”⁵² However, as Suri also cautions, “This is an area of research that requires more attention. No one has written a detailed study of Soviet responses to SDI from 1983 to 1991.”⁵³ The direct impact of the US economic warfare measures on the Soviet Union’s collapse is similarly difficult to analyze given the structural weaknesses of the Soviet system and the unintended consequences of Gorbachev’s *perestroika*, but it is reasonable to believe that the denial of hard currency to Moscow, the increase in oil prices, and the embargo on their imports of Western high technology products contributed to the acceleration of the USSR’s economic woes.⁵⁴

On the other hand, a group of historians disagrees with the argument that Reagan’s grand strategy led to the successful outcome of the Cold War. Wilson writes that “U.S. policies, as scripted in NSDD 32 and NSDD 75, were not responsible for pluralism and nationalism in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev was.” In fact, Gorbachev “pressed forward not because of SDI but in spite of it.”⁵⁵ The reasons for the change, Wilson contends, had much more to do with the Soviet leader’s personal commitment to the liberal ideas of *perestroika* and to a rapprochement with the West than with the pressure put on by Washington’s military buildup: “A different Soviet leader might have leapt at the chance to catch and surpass the Americans—many in the defense apparatus would have savored the fight—but Gorbachev took *perestroika* and other ideas more seriously than traditional concepts of security.”⁵⁶

Similarly, Russian historian Vlad Zubok claims that the reaction of the Soviets to SDI was “ambiguous” and that “there was no feeling of impending doom in political and military circles.”⁵⁷ Zubok writes that, in response to Reagan’s military buildup, Soviet Union leaders like Andropov and Ustinov initially discussed “emergency measures to mobilize the Soviet society and state for the task of preserving ‘strategic parity’ with the United States in an all-out arms race . . . Even Gorbachev, when he came to power, was under the influence of Andropov’s opinion that no compromise could be reached while Reagan remained in the White House.”⁵⁸ Unlike Wilson and others who credit Gorbachev for changing his mind and adopting a more liberal approach that eventually led to the peaceful end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet empire, however, Zubok echoes the Russian nationalist critics of Gorbachev who blame him for adopting policies that made “worse” the “grave economic, financial, and state crisis” of the Soviet Union after 1986. Most relevant to the role of US grand strategy, Zubok concludes

that “In retrospect, it is hard to see SDI as anything but a bit player in the finale of the confrontation.”⁵⁹

As more documents become available from Soviet archives, future scholars might fully buttress the view that Reagan’s SDI, the military buildup, and the economic pressure had a strong impact in the successful end of the Cold War, but for now that argument remains controversial in the literature. On balance, however, it seems reasonable to credit these elements of the administration’s grand strategy with making a positive contribution to strategic success, particularly in the longer term. Even if a less reformist leader than Gorbachev had been in power, the economic constraints imposed by the pressure to keep up with the military buildup and by the economic sanctions, combined with Reagan’s ideological pressure that supported the rise of democratic and nationalist movements in the Soviet empire (as will be shown in the next section), would have likely put any Soviet leader in a very poor strategic predicament. Having said that, the question remains as to whether these policies rooted in Reagan’s grand strategy made a larger contribution than, as the last mini-case study shows, his much more emergent and improvisational strategy in negotiating with the Soviet Union on issues such as nuclear weapons reductions.

Ideological Warfare and the Reagan Doctrine

Ronald Reagan’s highly successful ideological assault on Communism, a top priority of the grand strategy outlined in NSDD 75, was perhaps more effective than the military and economic pressure he put on the Soviet system. Fully aware that this murderous ideology had been responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people and for the economic misery and political oppression suffered by tens of millions more at the hands of hated dictators and of their internal security services in Eastern Europe and around the world, the president used powerful rhetoric to encourage dissidents to continue their fight for freedom.⁶⁰ In a commencement speech at Notre Dame, Reagan declared: “The years ahead are great ones for this country, for the cause of freedom and the spread of civilization. The West won’t contain Communism, it will transcend communism. It won’t bother to dismiss or denounce it, it will dismiss it as some bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages are even now being written.”⁶¹ A year later, in the Westminster address, Reagan called for a “crusade for freedom” and accurately predicted the coming revolutionary movements in Eastern Europe that would

finally overthrow the Soviet-imposed Communist dictators that enslaved those societies after World War II:

From Stettin on the Baltic to Varna on the Black Sea, the regimes planted by totalitarianism have had more than 30 years to establish their legitimacy. But none—not one regime—has yet been able to risk free elections. Regimes planted by bayonets do not take root . . . What I am describing now is a plan and a hope for the long term—the march of freedom and democracy which will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history as it has left other tyrannies which stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people.⁶²

In order to provide tangible support in addition to rhetorical support to pro-democracy activists, the Reagan administration launched a series of initiatives in the realm of public diplomacy and democracy assistance as well as more covert operations undertaken by the CIA. In the category of public diplomacy, the administration revamped Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty and Voice of America and started Project Truth, a program aimed at countering Soviet propaganda and exposing the brutal nature of the Communist regimes.⁶³ In 1983, the administration also created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), an institution dedicated to the global promotion of democracy.⁶⁴ The reasons for this policy were grounded in both moral and also strategic arguments: foreshadowing the arguments of the Democratic Peace Theory scholarship that emerged in recent decades, Reagan argued that “True peace rests on the principles of individual freedom, human rights, national self-determination, and respect for the rule of law . . . The rights of the individual and the rule of law are as fundamental to peace as arms control. A government which does not respect its citizens’ rights and its international commitments to protect those rights is not likely to respect its international undertakings.”⁶⁵

In addition to the overt support provided through the NED, this institution also served as a “conduit for covert aid to the Polish Solidarity movement, as well as to Czechoslovakian dissidents.”⁶⁶ Along with strong support from the Vatican and Pope John Paul II, the CIA also provided significant financial and logistical support for the Polish anti-Communist labor movement Solidarity, thus helping the group survive a government crackdown in the early 1980s and eventually overthrow the Communist government by the end of the decade.⁶⁷ Perhaps no other line was more significant to Reagan’s ideological offensive than his call on Gorbachev to “tear down this wall” in Berlin in 1987.⁶⁸ As a Russian dissident

remembers it, "To us, it was more than a question of Berlin or even of Germany. It was a question of the legitimacy of the Soviet empire. Reagan challenged the empire. To us, that meant everything. After that speech, everything was in play."⁶⁹ Similarly, the Polish leader Lech Walesa, echoing the feeling of other Eastern European dissidents, credited Reagan for the support he offered them to bring about the end of the Soviet empire: "In the Europe of the 1980s, Ronald Reagan presented a vision. For us in Central and Eastern Europe that meant freedom from the Soviets . . . we owe him our liberty."⁷⁰ A later study by Carnes Lord on the role of Reagan's public diplomacy highlighted the key role of Radio Free Europe in sustaining the ideological offensive in Eastern Europe, and particularly in Poland, during the key moments leading to the end of the Cold War in the 1980s.⁷¹

Reagan's strong support for freedom and human rights, however, did not prevent the administration, at least in its early years, from supporting anti-Communist insurgents fighting Soviet-backed regimes even when such groups did not show a commitment to liberal-democratic values or to the respect of human rights. Even though the president portrayed such groups as "freedom fighters," this description was much too generously applied to some of them. In a State of the Union address announcing this element of his grand strategy, later dubbed by the press the "Reagan Doctrine," the president proclaimed: "We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives—on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua—to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth."⁷² Perhaps the best evidence for this is the funding of insurgent movements under the umbrella of the Reagan Doctrine in Nicaragua (the Contras), in Afghanistan (the Mujahedeen), and in Angola (the UNITA).⁷³ A similar calculus also led the administration to depart from its idealistic principles in its early dealings with some Third World right-wing dictators. Influenced by UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick's argument that supporting pro-American dictators was necessary to combat the spread of Soviet Communism, the Reagan administration offered its support initially to authoritarian leaders in places like Panama, Argentina, the Philippines, El Salvador, and Chile. Gradually, Kirkpatrick's influence waned as she left the administration. New members, such as Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Elliott Abrams, pushed strongly for withdrawing support from former authoritarian allies such as the anti-Communist dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, who was removed from office in 1986, and for helping pro-democracy forces fighting against the pro-Western military dictator Augusto Pinochet in Chile.⁷⁴

The ideological warfare against the Soviet Union and the overt and covert support for democratic forces, particularly in Eastern Europe, are rightly considered some of Reagan's most important strategic accomplishments due to their contribution to the end of the Cold War. However, the legacy of supporting illiberal forces is more mixed. Alliances with anti-Communist insurgents and authoritarian (but anti-Soviet) leaders might have helped with the short-term fight against Soviet Communism (such as contributing to the Soviet military defeat in Afghanistan or preventing a potential Communist takeover in El Salvador) but nevertheless carried a significant blowback, particularly in the long run.⁷⁵ Ironically, given the Reagan Doctrine's rhetoric of freedom and democracy, America's image as a defender of such values and of human rights was damaged in parts of the Third World for years to come, contributing to anti-American sentiments and skepticism of US foreign policy goals both during the Cold War and beyond.⁷⁶ Moreover, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some historians pointed to the unintended negative consequences of supporting the Mujahedeen that later formed a core part of Al-Qaeda.⁷⁷

Nuclear Arms Control and Negotiations with the Soviet Union

If the Cold War had ended in 1985 instead of 1989, the Grand Strategy narrative that Reagan's military, economic, and ideological pressure led to the demise of the Soviet Union would have been far more powerful. However, Reagan made a series of consequential policy decisions in his second term that helped bring about the successful outcome of the Cold War but that were not shaped by his early grand strategic designs, and in some cases they even ran counter to the strategic principles advocated in these plans. Such a shift was most evident in Reagan's negotiations on nuclear arms control with the new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as well as on Reagan's overall attitude toward the prospect of diplomatic dialogue with the USSR aimed at diffusing tensions and achieving a stable peace.

While in the first term Reagan had tense relations with the Soviet leadership and no face-to-face meetings, in the second term he and Gorbachev held a series of productive summits. The two leaders met first in Geneva in 1985 and then in Reykjavik in 1986, where they could not reach an agreement. They eventually concluded the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at the Washington Summit in 1987; this agreement removed intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe. During these negotiations, Reagan was animated by the idea of eliminating nuclear weapons, an idea that he pushed unsuccessfully at the Reyk-

javik summit; this policy of nuclear abolitionism can hardly be reconciled with the grand strategic design of NSDD 75 that advocated the strengthening of nuclear deterrence. An important catalyst for Reagan's aversion to the long-standing doctrine of mutual assured destruction was his powerful realization, in the aftermath of NATO's Able Archer military exercise in late 1983, that a misunderstanding between the two superpowers could quickly lead to a mutual disaster. As the CIA revealed to the administration, the Soviets feared the exercise represented the start of a US nuclear attack. Reagan also abhorred the idea of ever having to rely on massive nuclear retaliation, which is the main reason why he pushed so strongly for SDI. Lastly, as Jeremi Suri points out, part of this change likely had to do with domestic politics as well: "Popular American fears of nuclear war in the early 1980s motivated a turn in Reagan administration policy."⁷⁸

In terms of his view of the Soviet Union and of diplomatic engagement with it, Reagan went from calling it an "evil empire" in 1983 to declaring in 1988 that "I was talking about another time, another era."⁷⁹ Reagan's view of the Soviet Union's leadership changed as he got to know Gorbachev better. In his memoirs, the president wrote that following their summits he concluded that "Gorbachev had the intelligence to admit Communism was not working, the courage to battle for change, and, ultimately, the wisdom to introduce the beginnings of democracy, individual freedom and free enterprise."⁸⁰ By 1986, according to declassified transcripts of his meetings with Gorbachev, Reagan adopted a far different tone than that of NSDD 32: "We harbor no hostile intentions toward the Soviets," Reagan assured Gorbachev. According to an administration official present at the Reykjavik summit in 1986, "we recognized the differences in our two systems, but the president felt that we could live as friendly competitors."⁸¹ One reason why Reagan adopted this conciliatory tone was that he realized Gorbachev represented his best chance to bring the Cold War to a peaceful end by implementing his liberalizing reforms in the Soviet Union and dismantling the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe and beyond; therefore, he wanted his counterpart to "show his strength to the Soviet gang back in the Kremlin."⁸²

In terms of judging the administration's strategic performance, there are at least a couple of ways to interpret Reagan's policies toward nuclear arms control and his engagement with the Soviet Union in his second term. For some advocates of the Grand Strategy paradigm, the administration's shifts represented tactical adaptations, not a change in grand strategy: as Mahnken argues, "The Reagan administration implemented the strategy outlined in NSDD 32 and NSDD 75 throughout the remainder of its two terms. Indeed, there was much more

continuity to the Reagan strategy that some historians admit . . . Implementing the strategy thus led to tactical, though not strategic, adaptation.”⁸³ A slightly different version of this argument holds that Reagan’s grand strategy aimed from the beginning at creating the conditions for negotiations to change Soviet behavior, not to change the regime, despite what the NSDD documents claimed: Brands contends that “[Reagan’s grand strategy aimed to persuade] Moscow to moderate its conduct and accept a less confrontational relationship with the West. Unlike hard-liners Casey and Pipes, who believed that the goal of U.S. policy should be to seek the collapse of the Soviet empire, Reagan saw strength as a prerequisite to—not a substitute for—successful diplomacy.”⁸⁴ In this view, therefore, Reagan “re-calibrated” his grand strategy in the second, thus showing that “flexibility could be no less important than perseverance” for strategic performance.⁸⁵ Brands’s analysis straddles the line between the Grand Strategy camp and a group of scholars that perceived Reagan’s second-term actions as much more than merely an adaptation.

In contrast to the Grand Strategy school, other experts regard Reagan’s second-term policies as a successful emergent strategic shift from his first-term designs. As Beth Fischer argues in her book *The Reagan Reversal*, “Both policy goals and strategies changed in 1984. In many respects, these changes represented a wholesale reversal of the administration’s earlier policies.”⁸⁶ This is also the thesis of Mann’s *Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, who brings as evidence remarks from former Reagan officials such as UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who claimed that Reagan initially believed that the Soviets were “aggressive and expansionist and dangerous . . . but Gorbachev changed his thinking.”⁸⁷

Similarly, Wilson’s recent book on improvisations and the end of the Cold War argues that one of the reasons for the focus on arms control diplomacy later in his presidency is that the members of the administration most skeptical of such negotiations, such as Richard Pipes, Richard Allen, Alexander Haig, and Bill Casey, left the administration around 1982–1983 or lost their influence in favor of others, such as George Shultz or Jack Matlock. These two advisers and their allies won bureaucratic battles in the second term, Wilson claims, and consequently shifted the administration’s foreign policy away from the guidance present in the early NSDD documents: “The crafting of strategy with the help of Jack Matlock harnessed strength to the purpose of changing how the Soviets behaved—not to overthrow the regime.”⁸⁸ More relevant for the argument of this book, Matlock and Shultz followed a “framework for pursuing strength and diplomacy simultaneously,” not a “grand strategy” to defeat the Soviet Union. Wilson also underlines

that nuclear abolitionism, a key goal of Reagan in his second-term arms control negotiations, was nowhere to be found in the early NSDDs.⁸⁹ In a similar vein, in a review of the current state of the historiographical debate on the end of the Cold War, Suri concludes that there is an emerging consensus that both Reagan and Gorbachev deserve credit for their actions, that Gorbachev's reforms were key for the eventual demise of the Soviet system, and that Reagan's second-term policies of engagement with the Soviet leader on nuclear and other issues helped bring about this fortunate outcome.⁹⁰

In 1977, Reagan told Richard Allen, one of his six future national security advisers, that "My idea of American policy toward the Soviet Union is simple, and some would say simplistic. It is this: We win and they lose."⁹¹ For all intents and purposes, by the end of Reagan's two terms in office the Americans indeed won and the Soviets lost. Was this extraordinarily successful strategic outcome primarily the result of Reagan's grand strategy outlined in the first term? Was it the result of his emergent adaptations in the second term? Of both of those developments? Or was it simply a very fortunate coincidence, as his critics argue? While scholars will continue to debate these questions as more archival material becomes available, there is little doubt that Reagan's emergent adaptations after 1984, exemplified by his summits with Gorbachev, the INF treaty, the general thaw in Soviet relations, and the quest to mutually eliminate nuclear weapons, will continue to be regarded as successful strategic moves. Even though the Grand Strategy model received important support in the previous two sections of this chapter, this last section, spanning the last few years preceding the successful ending of the Cold War, provides the Emergent Strategy paradigm with at least an equal amount of supporting evidence. Gaddis recently praised Reagan as one of America's "sharpest grand strategists ever."⁹² Wilson later disagreed with this statement, pointing to all the adaptations and improvisations in Reagan's diplomacy with Gorbachev in the years leading to the end of the Cold War.⁹³ Perhaps the way to reconcile these two views is to classify Ronald Reagan as one of America's sharpest emergent strategists ever.

George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and the Post–Cold War Era

The Cold War ended for all practical purposes in 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the overthrow of Communist regimes all around Eastern Europe without any opposition from the Soviet Union. The latter entity would eventually fall apart in 1991, when Moscow transitioned from being governed by the Soviet Communist Party to a quasidemocratic form of government. Thus, close to fifty years of geopolitical and ideological competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, and between the capitalist and Communist systems, came to an unexpectedly sudden conclusion.¹ The end of the Cold War caused the most significant disruption in US global strategy since the emergence of Containment in the aftermath of World War II. The Cold War was so much the organizing principle of American strategy in the second half of the twentieth century that the period immediately following it came to be known as the “post–Cold War” era. For this period, the scholarly debates on American grand strategy generally revolved around the question of how well the George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations did in their quest to find a successful grand strategy to replace the Containment paradigm of the Cold War era. Some scholars deplored the failure of both Bush and Clinton to adopt any long-range design for the new era and were generally critical of the results of *ad hoc* US foreign policy-making during this time.² Other scholars perceived more coherence and the contours of a grand strategic framework during the post–Cold War era; this second group of scholars, however, is split on what were the defining principles and above all the results of America’s global strategy in the 1990s, with critics calling it an ill-fated quest for “primacy” or “liberal hegemony” while defenders perceive it as a moderately successful strategy of “deep engagement” or “global leadership.”³

In this chapter, I argue that the principles of a post–Cold War strategy developed and evolved, in both planned and emergent fashion, in the later years of the Bush administration and the early years of the Clinton administration. The most important efforts of planning a grand strategy are the Bush administration’s New World Order, the Pentagon’s 1992 *Defense Planning Guidance*, and Clinton’s grand

strategy of “Enlargement and Engagement” outlined in his 1994 *National Security Strategy* document. In order to analyze the successes and failures of various elements of the post–Cold War strategy across a number of key policy areas, I use the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy paradigms to examine the following mini-cases: the Gulf War, NAFTA and the free trade agenda, America’s extensive alliance security commitments, the “world-ordering” military interventions in Haiti and the Balkans, Clinton’s use of airstrikes to combat nuclear proliferation and international terrorism, NATO enlargement, and US–Russia relations.

George H. W. Bush and the Origins of America’s Post–Cold War Strategy: The Gulf War, NAFTA, and Global Security Commitments

In its one-term tenure, the George H. W. Bush administration focused more on managing the peaceful end of the Cold War and less on developing a full-fledged grand strategy for the new era. The Bush team adroitly managed the reunification of Germany, the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union, and a short, successful war to reverse Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait, thus earning praise from scholars for its “crisis management” skills; however, despite these tactical successes, the administration was also heavily criticized for failing to develop a new grand strategy. Terry Deibel expressed a common critique of the president’s record when he concluded that Bush’s foreign policy “displays an intriguing mixture of competence and drift, of tactical mastery set in a larger pattern of strategic indirection.”⁴ Using a catchphrase popular in Washington at the time to criticize the administration, former Bush-era Pentagon official Eric Edelman acknowledged that “Bush and [National Security Advisor] Scowcroft lacked the inclination to engage in speculative ‘grand strategy’ or the ‘vision thing.’”⁵ Even though the administration did not plan or implement a grand strategy for the post–Cold War era, it nevertheless developed three principles for America’s new role as global superpower that ultimately became part of Washington’s implicit strategic framework in the 1990s during the Clinton administration.

A first such strategic principle was that the United States would use military force whenever it considered necessary not only to address immediate threats to the US homeland but also when it perceived threats to international stability more broadly defined. In retrospect, the international crisis caused by Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait was the key transition moment in America’s strategy from the Cold War view to the post–Cold War era. For the first time in almost fifty years,

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait forced Washington to deal with a national security crisis without being able to rely on the familiar lens of Containment as the guiding principle shaping its response. The Cold War was over for all practical purposes, and the Bush administration was faced with the task of deciding how to respond to Saddam's brazen act of aggression. More broadly, this crisis led policymakers to confront the larger question of how to think of a new international order and of America's grand strategy in a post-Cold War era. The Gulf War shaped the formation of an American post-Cold War strategy both in the run-up to the war, when the idea of a "New World Order" emerged, and also in the aftermath of the conflict, when the Pentagon incorporated the lessons learned from that crisis in the strategic planning that culminated with the classified *Defense Planning Guidance* of 1992 and follow-on unclassified *Regional Defense Strategy* published in January 1993.

The adoption of a direct leadership role for the United States military in maintaining global peace and security is best explained as an emergent principle developed in response to Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. Rather than being part of any explicit grand strategy, Bush's concept of a "New World Order" originated in a conversation with National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft shortly after the beginning of the Gulf crisis. In their joint memoir, Bush and Scowcroft recollect how "in the first days of the crisis we had started self-consciously to view our actions as setting a precedent for the approaching post-Cold War world . . . Our foundation was the premise that the United States henceforth would be obligated to lead the world community to an unprecedented degree, as demonstrated by the Iraqi crisis, and that we should attempt to pursue our national interests, wherever possible, within a framework of concert with our friends and the international community."⁶

Hence, from the beginning the response to the Gulf crisis took on more strategic meaning in the minds of US officials than merely reversing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait to protect US economic interests in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region. The vision of a unique leadership role for Washington crystallized in the discussions surrounding this formative event.

Over the next few months leading to the American-led attack on Iraqi forces in Kuwait, and in the aftermath of the resulting conflict, the president and other senior members of his administration commonly used the slogan "New World Order" to describe their strategic vision for the post-Cold War world. Initially, the term served to place the decision to launch the Gulf War in a more idealistic

framework, as President Bush was courting the support of many skeptics in Congress: “what is at stake is not simply our energy or economic security and the stability of a vital region but the prospects for peace in the post–Cold War era—the promise of a new world order based on the rule of law.”⁷ Scowcroft even admitted to a reporter that the concept was also a “catchphrase” used for domestic political purposes.⁸ In a remarkable parallel to the formation of the Truman Doctrine, the universalist and idealistic language employed at least in large part to garner congressional and public support for intervention in the Gulf (or aid to Greece and Turkey) came to influence the formation of American strategy far beyond the initial decisions. Once Bush launched the idea, he became committed to it and went on to elaborate on its meaning in more detail than he might have planned on doing initially. Such a decision-making process fits the tenets of the Emergent Strategy paradigm much more than the Grand Strategy model.

When asked by a reporter what was the main threat now that the Soviet Union was gone, Bush answered that “the enemy is instability, the enemy is uncertainty.”⁹ Consequently, in order to maintain the emerging stable and prosperous world order, as then-National Security Council staffer Robert Gates pithily put it, “our central mission is shifting from containment of an enemy to the promotion of stability.”¹⁰ Such comments show the priority given to the United States military in maintaining regional and international stability in the new post–Cold War era. Bush declared that the United States would be the leader of the international community in the transition to this New World Order. Even though collective resistance would be the preferred way to address the threats to peace, the United States would have a special role in leading this multilateral effort: “Among the nations of the world, only the United States of America has both the moral standing and the means to back it up. We’re the only nation on this Earth that could assemble the forces of peace. This is the burden of leadership and the strength that has made America the beacon of freedom in a searching world.”¹¹

Therefore, the unique global leadership role for the United States in the post–Cold War era, its responsibility for building coalitions and if necessary using force to maintain international stability, and the preference for multilateral action and United Nations (UN) approval but willingness to use force even without them if it must (“This aggression will not stand,” declared Bush days after the crisis, making clear he would go to war with or without a UN authorization)—all these elements of America’s post–Cold War strategy emerged from the Gulf War experience. Bush’s dogged determination to go to war has been recently confirmed by more archival evidence made available with the publication of his authorized

biography. As Jon Meacham reveals, Bush was committed to remove Saddam from Kuwait even without congressional authorization:

In late November 1990, mulling a scenario in which he lacked an explicit congressional resolution, Bush dictated: "It is only the United States that can do what needs to be done. I still hope against hope that Saddam will get the message; but if he doesn't, we've got to take this action; and if it works in a few days, and he gives up, or is killed, or gets out, Congress will say, 'Attaboy, we did it, wonderful job; wasn't it great we stayed together.' If it drags out and there are high casualties, I will be history; but no problem—sometimes in life you've got to do what you've got to do."¹²

The successful outcome of this conflict in the short run, with Saddam's forces being pushed out of Kuwait by a US-led coalition in no more than one hundred hours and with minimal casualties, supports the Emergent Strategy model. As Steve Yetiv's detailed exploration of Bush's decision-making during the Gulf War demonstrates, unlike what Grand Strategy proponents would expect, "there was no apparent correlation between the quality of the decision-making and the outcome."¹³ More specifically, a positive outcome emerged from a process involving seemingly nonstrategic behavior, such as Bush's personalization of the conflict and the impact of past events on the president's behavior, as opposed to a more deliberate strategic planning analysis of costs and benefits.¹⁴ For Washington's national security community, this positive outcome reinforced the notion that the United States had a great positive role and responsibility to play in punishing and deterring aggressors who posed a threat to international security. In the longer run, this intervention also presumably had a powerful deterring effect on other states that might have contemplated territorial aggression in the post-Cold War era. A major reason for the lack of state-on-state wars challenging the US-guaranteed liberal world order in the 1990s was that Washington and its allies showed themselves capable and willing to swiftly punish potential aggressors.

A second principle of the post-Cold War strategy originating in the Bush years was the idea that the expansion of free trade and free markets should be a core component of US foreign policy in the new era. At the end of the Cold War, the United States had only one free-trade agreement, with Israel. The post-Cold War era witnessed a concerted effort on the part of Washington leaders to liberalize international trade by pushing bilateral free-trade agreements and working with other states to set up a global trade organization. The forceful promotion of free trade had its origins in Bush's commitment to a North American Free Trade Area

(NAFTA), despite some powerful opposition at home from protectionist interest groups, congressional members from districts adversely affected by lowering trade barriers, and populist/isolationist politicians such as Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan.

Secretary of State James Baker described the effort to form institutions like NAFTA as being inspired by the building of international institutions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank following World War II and in the early stages of the Cold War. Just as statesmen such as Truman and Acheson created these institutions that in turn contributed to a successful American grand strategy for the next era, Baker recalled, "at a time of similar opportunity and risk, I believed we should take a leaf from their book . . . The geostrategic revolution of my years at State would be matched by an economic one. Our stake in its outcome were vast . . . Interdependence was inexorably bounding our domestic economy to the outside world."¹⁵

The 1991 *National Security Strategy* promised to "promote an open and expanding international economic system, based on market principles, with minimal distortions to trade and investment, stable currencies, and broadly respected rules for managing and resolving economic disputes."¹⁶ On more specific issues, the document listed the importance for the new world order to complete the Uruguay Round of global trade negotiations and also mentioned the lowering of bilateral trade barriers with Japan and the expansion of the US-Canada free trade agreement to include Mexico as key for advancing trade liberalization. While the administration, from the president on down, understood the importance of expanding free trade for the American strategic vision of a liberal world order and also believed in the positive economic impact of free trade on the struggling US economy, the negotiations with both the external partners (Mexico and Canada) and with Congress and myriad domestic interest groups were highly complex. The president's strong personal involvement contributed to the signing of the NAFTA agreement in Mexico City on December 17, 1992, shortly before he left office, thus leaving his successor in a good position to get the treaty ratified by Congress and implemented.

President Clinton followed in the footsteps of Bush in expanding free trade as a component of post-Cold War American strategy. The advent of free trade has been regarded as leading to the advance of a peaceful and prosperous liberal world order abroad but also as necessary for America's own economic success in an age of globalization.¹⁷ On the verge of signing the NAFTA agreement in 1993,

Clinton declared: "For this new era, our national security we now know will be determined as much by our ability to pull down foreign trade barriers as by our ability to breach distant ramparts. Once again, we are leading. And in so doing, we are rediscovering a fundamental truth about ourselves: When we lead, we build security, we build prosperity for our own people."¹⁸ In addition to securing passage of NAFTA following a brutal congressional fight, Clinton advanced the free trade and economic globalization agenda in other ways throughout the rest of his presidency. In 1995, Washington played a leading role in concluding the Uruguay round of international trade negotiations and establish the World Trade Organization (WTO). That same year, when Mexico experienced a currency crisis that threaten regional economic cooperation, the United States organized a \$50 billion bailout administered by the IMF. In 2000, the United States extended "normal trade status" to China and promoted Beijing's accession to WTO. Lastly, the Clinton administration also lifted the Vietnam trade embargo.

Despite its continuity throughout this era, the trade liberalization principle of America's post-Cold War strategy elicits far less attention and controversy in the scholarly literature than other security-oriented topics. Some scholars have ignored this issue altogether in discussions of American grand strategy: in a seminal article on the topic in the 1990s, Barry Posen and Andrew Ross did not include trade (or anything about the international economy) in any of the dimensions of their analysis of competing grand strategic visions.¹⁹ Historians such as John Gaddis and Jeremi Suri similarly analyzed post-Cold War grand strategy without any discussion of free trade or economic globalization. A more balanced and accurate view is offered by Hal Brands, but ultimately his interpretation is also questionable. He does present Clinton's emphasis on free trade as a coequal pillar of foreign policy but ultimately dismisses it as part of a "post-Cold War fad in geopolitical thinking." He contends that it failed because throughout the 1990s free trade and globalization did not win widespread domestic support.²⁰ However, despite some domestic opposition, both Clinton's Republican successor (George W. Bush) and the Democratic president coming after him (Barack Obama) continued and greatly expanded the free trade agenda by reaching such agreements with dozens of countries.²¹

Most mainstream international economists argue that liberalizing trade benefits the American economy as a whole, and therefore such free trade agreements are usually considered policy successes in economic terms. This is even more the case in grand strategic terms, as growing economic interdependence and participation in international partnerships foster better diplomatic relations

among states and advance America's interest in a prosperous liberal world order. Presidents Bush and Clinton both deserve credit for deliberately elevating the expansion of free trade as a priority for America's post-Cold War grand strategy, and consequently the Grand Strategy model finds important support in this mini-case study.

A third strategic principle originating with the Bush administration was the maintenance of regional security commitments to American allies in three key areas of the world (Europe, East Asia, and the Persian Gulf), commitments made possible by maintaining a cutting-edge and forward-deployed global military capability. The origins of this principle lie in a couple of parallel strategic reviews conducted by the Department of Defense (DoD). The civilian leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense launched a multi-year process of overhauling America's defense strategy, culminating with the classified 1992 *Defense Planning Guidance* (DPG) and its unclassified version, the *Regional Defense Strategy* (RDS), published in January 1993. At the same time, the military under Joint Chiefs Chairman Colin Powell prepared a parallel review that produced the "Base Force" concept outlining the force structure needed for the new era.

The DoD civilian planning effort caused a stir in Washington at the time not mainly for their specific recommendations (a cut in force structure by about 25 percent from the Cold War level) but for its grand strategic analysis of the United States' role in the coming post-Cold War strategic era. An early draft of the DPG leaked to the *New York Times* stated as "the prime objective" of American strategy "to prevent the reemergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union."²² When a story on the DPG appeared on the front page of the *New York Times* in March 1992, the Bush administration came under criticism for the blunt language and seemingly hegemonic approach the document took to the post-Cold War era.²³ Some anonymous members of the administration in the White House and the State Department targeted the draft's language, distancing themselves from its analysis and recommendations.²⁴

Grand strategy scholars described the document and its fate in harsh terms: historian Andrew Bacevich attributed the leaked draft directly to Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz by calling it "Wolfowitz's handiwork" and described it as "a blueprint for permanent American global hegemony" that was "quickly disowned" by the Bush administration; the revised version of the DPG, Bacevich argues, echoing the conventional view, "purged of all offending references suggesting big-enchilada like aspirations."²⁵ Similarly, political scien-

tist William Wohlforth referred to the *DPG* as the “rise and sudden demise of an official strategy for preserving primacy.”²⁶ In short, most scholars regard this document as a plan for global hegemony that Bush rejected. Hence, they deny that the document had an important role in America’s grand strategy after the end of the Cold War. A closer look at some recently declassified drafts of the *DPG* and its public *RDS* version, along with the published recollection of its top drafters and interviews with them, present a very different picture of the Pentagon’s defense planning between 1990 and 1993. And unlike what the scholars above argued, the strategic ideas present in *DPG/RDS* and the Base Force were actually more influential in the long run than they had been given credit for.

Former Pentagon official ambassador Eric Edelman began a much-needed reassessment of *DPG* in 2011 by carefully tracing back many of the misconceptions surrounding it.²⁷ For example, contrary to Bacevich’s claim that the leaked draft was Wolfowitz’s blueprint for hegemony, in fact neither Secretary Cheney nor his top aides, like Wolfowitz or Lewis Libby, saw the draft that was leaked to the *New York Times*.²⁸ In future versions that benefited from top leadership editing under Libby’s and Wolfowitz’s direction, the idea that “preventing a new rival” is the “first objective” of US defense strategy is no longer present. This change did not represent a toning down of the rhetoric to mollify critics following the controversy caused by the leaked draft but rather an effort to bring the *DPG* in line with the actual strategic direction favored by the top Pentagon leadership all along.²⁹ Wolfowitz explains that the early draft and the hegemonic idea of a “sole superpower” did not represent his thinking or that of the final *DPG* and *RDS*. Instead, he argued for a focus on alliances and security commitments in key regions to avoid them falling under the influence of a hostile power: “[The *DPG*] proposed to preserve and extend the strategic depth achieved with the end of the Cold War by shaping developments in the three regions of greatest strategic significance—Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf—not through the use of force, but by shaping the expectations of both friends and potential adversaries. This was a direction that was very different from . . . a ‘sole surviving superpower’ that would be able to dominate all others by itself.”³⁰

One piece of evidence confirming this interpretation is the fact that the *DPG* represented a culmination of the thinking going on in the Defense Department over the previous four years. Indeed, the shift from global containment to a regional defense strategy was first aired by Bush in a speech at Aspen in August 1990, the substance of which is in line with the final *DPG/RDS* and contains no references to “preventing peer rivals” or other language to that effect.³¹ The final

document calls for the United States “to strengthen our alliances and to extend the zone of peace to include the newly independent nations of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union . . . Together with our allies, we must preclude hostile non-democratic powers from dominating critical regions and otherwise work to build an international environment conducive to our values.”³²

A key contribution of the strategy was the shift away from a “threat-based” force planning construct, which had been suitable during the Cold War’s overarching Soviet threat, to one that was defined by the new US global leadership role and to what the RDS called “shaping the future security environment” and preserving the “strategic depth” earned after the successful end of a long and costly competition against the Soviet Union.³³ During the Cold War, countering Moscow’s capabilities provided a convenient guidepost for the structure and size of US military forces. With the disappearance of the Soviet threat, the American military establishment refocused its attention from containing the Soviet Union to supporting a world-ordering role for the United States military. As then Joint Chiefs chairman Powell put it in 1991, the United States should size its military based on the new role as chief guarantor of global security in key regions of the world: “One of the most striking features of this new world we face is that America is the sole remaining superpower. We are also the preeminent force for stability in the world . . . You’ve got to step aside from the context we’ve been using for the past forty years, that you base [military planning] against a specific threat . . . What we plan for is that we’re a superpower. We are the major player on the world stage with responsibilities [and] interests around the world.”³⁴

Absent an overarching threat, the 1993 *Regional Defense Strategy* listed four major objectives for US military forces, all of which would remain staples of US defense policy in the post–Cold War era: deter or defeat an attack against US territory or that of its allies, strengthen the alliance systems binding democratic nations, preclude any hostile power from dominating a region critical to US interests (Europe, East Asia, the Middle East / Persian Gulf, and Latin America), and, lastly, help preclude conflict by reducing sources of regional instability and limit violence should conflicts occur.³⁵ These four goals constituted the Pentagon’s view of how the United States would “shape the future” and “maintain strategic depth.”

Even though the Republican Bush administration was replaced by the Democratic Clinton administration, these general principles of “shaping the future” and “maintaining strategic depth” outlined the contours of the defense policy commitments that supported America’s foreign policy for the next decade. The exact military force structure was a matter of some debate throughout the 1990s

and beyond, but the broad objectives remained remarkably similar across a number of defense planning reviews, from George H. W. Bush's Base Force to Clinton's Bottom-Up Review and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review.³⁶ These requirements included maintaining a large enough military edge to dissuade hostile powers from attempting to challenge US interests in key regions, maintaining forward-deployed troops in key regions where the United States had alliance obligations, maintaining the ability to conduct two large-scale major wars in quick succession (Clinton's first defense secretary, Les Aspin, initially suggested a one-and-a-half war planning construct but ultimately reverted to accepting the two-war planning paradigm), and assuring unimpeded access to the "global commons" (air, sea, space, and later cyberspace). In order to secure these ambitious goals, successive US administrations continued to invest far more resources in defense than any other country.³⁷ Even if Clinton reduced the size of the military and the resources allocated to it, he did not reduce its security commitments or its forward-deployed posture, thus preserving America's globally dominant military presence.³⁸

The strategic wisdom of America's post-Cold War maintenance of a global alliance system backed by a globally preeminent military force has been the subject of intense debate in the grand strategy expert community. Critics of it, such as Christopher Layne, Barry Posen, Robert Pape, or John Mearsheimer, argued that this strategic principle was not only too expensive but also counterproductive and detrimental to US national interest.³⁹ In their view, America's quest to preserve "strategic depth" was self-defeating because it led to increasing pushback from competing regional powers looking to balance US dominance while at the same time allowing America's allies to "free ride" and to engage in imprudent behavior and thus "entangle" the United States in unnecessary conflicts. On the contrary, defenders of this element of post-Cold War grand strategy, such as Peter Feaver, Hal Brands, Stephen Brooks, John Ikenberry, or William Wohlforth, contended that America's alliance system and forward-deployed military successfully underpinned the liberal world order in the 1990s by protecting the global commons and by deterring the rise of a hostile power in a replay of the Cold War. Moreover, they argued that Washington's security commitments increased US leverage over its allies rather than causing "entanglement" by them, prevented further nuclear proliferation, and did all that at a modest cost when compared to the historical levels of defense spending or with the potential costs of intervening in a major regional conflict that might have occurred had Washington withdrawn in the 1990s from its efforts to underwrite global security.⁴⁰

While the success or failure of this principle of the post–Cold War grand strategy may remain a contested topic in the scholarly literature for some time, the recent signs of instability in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia (such as Russia’s invasion of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine and its military presence in Syria, Iran’s powerful quest for regional hegemony, and China’s aggressive naval moves in the East Asian littoral) seem to indicate that the defenders of America’s role as ultimate guarantor of regional security may gain the upper hand in this debate. If that turns out to be the case, the 1993 *Regional Defense Strategy* provides important evidence in support of the Grand Strategy model’s explanation for the development of this successful principle.

Bill Clinton’s Designs: Enlargement, Engagement, and Multilateralism

Bill Clinton came into office in January 1993 after a campaign in which he criticized Bush for being too cautious in supporting the massive shift toward democracy and free markets in the world. During the campaign, candidate Clinton called for “An America that champions the cause of freedom and democracy from Eastern Europe to Southern Africa—and in our own hemispheres, in Haiti and Cuba.”⁴¹ He regarded his administration as the first truly post–Cold War presidency and vowed to pursue a foreign policy focused on the new challenges and opportunities of the new strategic era: “Having won the Cold War, we must not now lose the peace.”⁴² Despite the campaign rhetoric suggesting a shift in foreign policy, Clinton’s designs from his first year in office show that the new administration incorporated the core of the three principles of US global leadership described in the previous section and added to them an emphasis on the promotion of democracy.

In the fall of 1993, the Clinton administration rolled out a grand strategy of Enlargement purposefully designed to replace Containment as the guiding framework for America’s role in the world. In a series of speeches that fall, President Clinton, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright laid out their principles and vision for the United States in the post–Cold War era. The overarching goal of preserving the leadership of a liberal world order permeated their views. Clinton told the United Nations General Assembly that “The United States intends to remain engaged and to lead . . . In a new era of peril and opportunity, our overriding purpose must be to ex-

pand and strengthen the world community of market-based democracies.”⁴³ His national security adviser fleshed out the administration’s grand strategic ideas in a speech suggestively titled “From Containment to Enlargement.” Lake presented Enlargement as the new grand strategy: “The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world’s free community of market democracies.” The speech began with an assessment of the international system and the US role in it. Much like Bush’s view, the Clinton administration asserted that the United States should act as the leading global power: “We are its [the world’s] dominant power. Those who say otherwise sell America short. The fact is, we have the world’s strongest military, its largest economy and its most dynamic, multiethnic society. We are setting a global example in our efforts to reinvent our democratic and market institutions. Our leadership is sought and respected in every corner of the world . . . Our interests and ideals compel us not only to be engaged, but to lead.”⁴⁴

Clinton’s first *National Security Strategy* (NSS), suggestively titled *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, formalized the administration’s plans for US global leadership in the post-Cold War era and its support for free-market democracies. The document begins by noticing the unique leadership role America must play in the post-Cold War era in order to advance its security and economic national interests: “If we exert our leadership abroad, we can make America safer and more prosperous—by deterring aggression, by fostering the peaceful resolution of dangerous conflicts, by opening foreign markets, by helping democratic regimes and by tackling global problems. Without our active leadership and engagement abroad, threats will fester and our opportunities will narrow.”⁴⁵ The strategy argues that the spread of “democracy and political and economic liberalization” around the world, but “particularly in countries of geostrategic importance to us,” is conducive to a safe and prosperous America in the twenty-first century.⁴⁶

The document lists three central components of Enlargement and Engagement:

1. Maintain strong defense capability and promote cooperative security measures,
2. Open foreign markets, and
3. Promote democracy abroad.⁴⁷

In order to achieve the first component, the strategy adopts the Two Major Contingencies military force structure requirement developed by Bush’s Penta-

gon, and it similarly emphasizes the importance of US forward-deployed troops in order to deter aggression and underwrite regional stability:

Our forces must be able to help offset the military power of regional states with interests opposed to those of the United States and its allies. To do this, we must be able to credibly deter and defeat aggression, by projecting and sustaining U.S. power in more than one region if necessary . . .

U.S. forces must also be forward deployed or stationed in key overseas regions in peacetime to deter aggression. Such overseas presence demonstrates our commitment to allies and friends, underwrites regional stability, gains us familiarity with overseas operating environments, promotes combined training among the forces of friendly countries, and provides timely initial response capabilities.⁴⁸

While proclaiming a US military role in maintaining regional stability in key regions, the Clinton administration's strategy also prioritized engagement and partnerships with great powers like Russia and China in order to integrate them more fully into the liberal world order.⁴⁹ Regarding the second component of the strategy, free trade, the NSS reinforced America's commitment to conclude free trade agreements, both regionally and globally, in order to enhance the access of US firms to foreign markets and promote economic prosperity.⁵⁰ Lastly, the third objective, democracy promotion, required that "a key part of our national security strategy" would involve "working with new democratic states to help preserve them as democracies committed to free markets and respect for human rights."⁵¹

Perhaps one of the most controversial elements of the post-Cold War grand strategy was America's use of military force in "world-ordering" interventions. The Clinton administration certainly struggled with defining a doctrine for the use of force during its first years, and therefore a more detailed discussion of their deliberations on this issue is needed to contextualize the final language adopted in the 1994 NSS. Under the subheading "Deciding When and How to Employ U.S. Forces," the document states: "Our strategy calls for the development and deployment of American military forces in the United States and abroad to respond to key dangers—those posed by weapons of mass destruction, regional aggression and threats to the stability of states."⁵² The first type of threat, that of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), was highlighted as early as 1993 by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as one of the top concerns of the administration: "The possible aggressive use of such weapons remains perhaps the greatest threat to international peace and our security."⁵³ The actual use of military force to counter this threat, however, was limited in practice to airstrikes. The second type of

threat, that of regional aggression (similar to a Gulf War scenario), also did not require major commitments during the 1990s, arguably as a result of US forces successfully deterring another such blatant aggression. It was the use of force to counter the third type of threat, “the stability of states,” that caused the most headaches for the administration’s planners.

In the initial planning stages of Clinton’s foreign policy, the administration hoped for a leading role for the United Nations in such stability and peacekeeping operations, with US forces in a supportive role. This was the idea behind Madeleine Albright’s doctrine of Assertive Multilateralism, a concept that envisioned the US military working together with beefed-up UN capabilities on peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations.⁵⁴ The White House debated a Presidential Review Directive (PRD 13) which would have asked US forces to “help plan, train and participate in U.N. peace-keeping activities when justified by general U.S. interests, not just when the United States could make a unique military contribution.”⁵⁵ This document has been regarded by Hal Brands as signifying an “ambitious expansion of U.S. humanitarianism efforts worldwide” and as evidence that “armed humanitarianism” became one of the two dominant aspects of Clinton’s foreign policy, along with free trade.⁵⁶ The new team was populated at high levels by many foreign policy experts (Anthony Lake, Richard Holbrooke, Les Aspin, and Madeleine Albright) favorably disposed to the use of military force in such operations. In a direct rebuke to Colin Powell’s opposition to such nontraditional missions, incoming Secretary of Defense Les Aspin mentioned in his confirmation hearing that the restrictive Powell Doctrine “might set the threshold for using force too high for many of the problems that the United States will face in the post-cold war era.”⁵⁷ Madeleine Albright also made the same point when she asked Powell, “What’s the point of having this superb military that you’re always talking about if we can’t use it?”⁵⁸

This willingness to use the American military in multilateral partnership with United Nations-backed forces for peacekeeping and stability operations diminished considerably after an ill-fated humanitarian operation in Somalia. The killing of nineteen US servicemen in Mogadishu on October 3, 1993, and the political nightmare amplified by the disturbing images of some of the bodies being dragged through the streets, forced Clinton to reconsider the thorny issues of use of force in places like Bosnia or Somalia. To compound the administration’s misery, a week after the Battle of Mogadishu, a US navy ship without adequate military support was turned away from docking in Haiti by an angry mob, reinforcing the image of a weak Clinton administration in strategic disarray.⁵⁹

The hard lessons learned from Somalia regarding the difficulty of conducting multilateral UN peacekeeping operations in the midst of conflict-ridden states, and the low tolerance for casualties on the part of the American public for such missions, represented a turning point in the evolution of the administration's thinking on intervention in intrastate conflicts. Clinton came to believe that "the average American doesn't see our interest threatened to the point where we should sacrifice one American life."⁶⁰ The administration's new policy statement on multilateral peace operations, Presidential Decision Directive 25, reflected a newly found skepticism compared to the "assertive multilateralism" earlier rhetoric and warned that in certain cases the "turmoil may not be susceptible to the efforts of the international community."⁶¹

The policy debate on the criteria for the use of force was also reflected in the drafting of the 1994 *NSS*. As one of the main drafters of the document, Peter Feaver, remembers, "Mostly what the friction was, it was frustration at the text level with what was evident at the policy level, namely that the president had high aspirations but low willingness to pay the price to actually see it through, very reluctant to wield American power if it risked American casualties."⁶² The language in the *NSS*, reflecting PDD-25, is reflective of this cautious view: "Our engagement must meet reasonable cost and feasibility thresholds. We will be more inclined to act where there is reason to believe that our action will bring lasting improvement. On the other hand, our involvement will be more circumscribed when other regional or multilateral actors are better positioned to act than we are."⁶³ In summary, after Somalia, the administration planned to generally rely on multilateralism and regional actors to address stability and humanitarian concerns brought up by intrastate conflicts and to intervene only in narrow circumstances particularly well suited for an American role.

World-Ordering Military Interventions: Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo

The cautious approach to US military interventions in civil conflicts enshrined in the 1994 *National Security Strategy* following the Mogadishu debacle represents a poor guide for understanding the administration's actions in this policy domain throughout the 1990s. On the contrary, the Clinton team developed a more interventionist approach to the use of American power in emergent fashion by learning from its early actions in an incremental way. The Somalia experience in the fall of 1993 highlighted the costs and risks of intervention, but the genocide in Rwanda in the spring of 1994 made painfully clear to the Clin-

ton administration the potentially horrendous costs of nonintervention.⁶⁴ As the president recalled in his memoirs, “neither I nor anyone in my foreign policy team adequately focused on sending troops to stop the slaughter.”⁶⁵ In a later trip to Rwanda, he remorsefully declared: “We in the United States and the world community did not do as much as we could have and should have done to try to limit what occurred.”⁶⁶

A brief military operation in Haiti later that year provided the administration with a much-needed success on which to build. In July 1994, the Clinton administration persuaded the UN Security Council to pass a resolution authorizing “all necessary means” to force the ruling junta in Haiti to allow ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return to power. When the generals refused, Clinton approved a military invasion of the island. On September 18, with US warplanes on their way and the threat of invasion imminent, the junta led by General Cedras relented and reached an agreement with an American delegation on the ground that allowed for the return of the illegally deposed former president Aristide and the restoration of democracy. Some 20,000 American troops deployed to Haiti to implement the agreement, thus achieving the first military success of the administration. Even though no shots were fired, Washington used the threat of force to restore a democratically elected leader.

Senior leaders in the administration made it clear that they saw this intervention as a part of their commitment to democratic enlargement and American global leadership of the new liberal world order. In a memo to the president on the eve of the invasion, national security adviser Tony Lake talked about Haiti representing a test for “our commitment to defend democracy, especially where it is most fragile.”⁶⁷ This crisis represented a threat to US national interest in the post-Cold War era, Lake wrote, because it challenged “the leadership of the United States and the credibility of the international community.”⁶⁸ State Department Policy Planning Director Jim Steinberg reinforced these ideas by declaring that the “Clinton’s administration strategy is probably best captured in Haiti, where the argument was that you cannot let democracy be interrupted. You have a very powerful interest in not having democracy interrupted.”⁶⁹

The small-scale success in Haiti was reinforced the following year by the US-led NATO intervention in Bosnia, culminating in the Dayton Peace Accords and 60,000 NATO troops (20,000 of them American) deployed to implement the peace agreement.⁷⁰ After his unsuccessful push for a policy of “lift and strike” early in 1993, Clinton did not attempt any major initiative to address the ongoing Bosnian conflict until the Serb massacre of Bosnian Muslims at Srebrenica

in July 1995. The horrific images represented not only a humanitarian disaster but also a vivid display of the failure on the part of the United States to lead the international community in bringing about a solution to this conflict in the heart of Europe.⁷¹ With his passivity during the genocide in Rwanda fresh in his mind, the president decided to risk the use of force. He reversed the previous Bosnia policy that allowed European allies and the United Nations to eschew stronger military action against the Serbs, and he charged Tony Lake to come up with a more aggressive “endgame” scenario.⁷² He also designated the hawkish Richard Holbrooke, a well-known advocate of a NATO bombing campaign, to conduct his Bosnia diplomacy. Airstrikes began on August 30, after the Serbs’ shelling of a marketplace killed scores of civilians. After three weeks of bombing, the Serbs agreed to meet the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats for peace negotiations. Holbrooke subsequently brokered a peace treaty between the three Bosnian warring parties in Dayton, OH, and on November 21 they signed an agreement that ended the Bosnian War.

Chollet and Goldgeier rightly regard the Bosnian intervention as a true “turning point” in Clinton’s foreign policy.⁷³ The president acted decisively on his emerging strategic vision regarding the special “global-ordering” role required of the United States military in the new post-Cold War era. As he explained the intervention to the American people, Clinton used language indicating the emergent shift in his strategy based on the lessons of the recent conflicts: “As we saw in the Gulf War and in Haiti, many other nations who share our goals will also share our burdens. But when America does not lead, the consequences can be very grave, not only for others but eventually for us as well.”⁷⁴ Such an argument echoed those made in an internal memo by then US ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright to Tony Lake; she argued that “America must take the lead” and that the previous strategy of giving primary responsibility to the Europeans “is no longer sustainable.”⁷⁵

In another sign of an emergent approach consciously building on what it called “the Haiti model,” the Clinton team decided in a National Security Council meeting on September 21, 1995 to adopt a military strategy based on “insert[ing] a large and heavily-equipped force at the outset in order to deter non-compliance by the parties but then phased down the force quickly once stable conditions have been established.”⁷⁶ Similarly, in keeping with the emerging shift from a UN-centered vision of international security toward a US-led world order, the Clinton administration also insisted on “a single NATO chain of command” with “no UN dual key.”⁷⁷ In a later speech, Clinton expressed even more clearly the key

role played by US military interventions in defending the new liberal world order in the 1990s: "Imagine the ongoing reign of terror and the flood of refugees to our shore had we not backed diplomacy with force in Haiti. Imagine the shells and the slaughter we would still be seeing in Bosnia had we not brought our force to bear through NATO."⁷⁸

The strategic learning process continued after Bosnia as well.⁷⁹ The first lesson from this conflict was that Washington managed to get the desired outcome even though it relied solely on airstrikes in the combat phase of the intervention, thus limiting the risk of American casualties and in turn making the mission more politically sustainable. Second, the United Nations was removed from the decision loop on targeting so as to free the hand of the United States to act more aggressively against the Serbs, a shift from the earlier vision of close US-UN cooperation and a harbinger of things to come in Kosovo, where the UN Security Council was bypassed altogether. And third, the intervention strengthened NATO and gave it a new purpose in fighting the new type of missions the West would likely get involved in given that the Soviet menace had disappeared. This last issue is very relevant because, as former Clinton National Security Council staffer Jeremy Rosner put it in an interview, "a failure to deal with a major war within Europe would weaken the entire transatlantic relationship."⁸⁰ Such an outcome would be a blow to maintaining the alliance system that formed an essential part of America's post-Cold War strategy.

The years following the end of the Bosnian conflict witnessed increasing tensions between the ethnic Albanians inhabiting the Kosovo province and the Serb military and police forces controlling the area. As the former group issued greater demands for autonomy and independence, the latter used more and more brutal techniques, including artillery shelling of civilian areas, to suppress them. American diplomats and their European counterparts made a final effort to stop the ethnic violence by peaceful means at the Rambouillet conference, but Serbian President Slobodan Milošević refused to cede military control of the province and allow NATO peacekeepers to come in. After a final ultimatum in February 1999 was rejected, the United States and its NATO allies began a bombing campaign the following month. Initially limited in scope, the campaign was incrementally expanded to target Serbian civilian infrastructure in addition to military targets. Despite the Serbian resolve when confronted with intensifying aerial bombings, Clinton stuck to his initial principle of using no ground troops for the first months of the war. In May, however, the president declared that "all options are on the table," and NATO began amassing troops south of Yugoslavia to

convince the Serbs that a ground invasion was a distinct possibility. At the same time the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) grew in strength and intensified its operations on the ground against the Serb forces. As a result of all these factors, Milošević accepted NATO's peace offer on June 3, 1999, and started to withdraw his troops from the province. The following year, he lost the presidential elections, and in 2001 he was arrested and taken to The Hague to be tried for the crimes against humanity and genocide perpetrated under his command.

Clinton's reasons for launching the Kosovo War and his decisions about how to pursue it are consistent with his emerging vision for America's use of force in the post-Cold War era. As the president declared on national television the night the bombing started, the actions in Kosovo were a direct result of the learning process that followed Bosnia: "We learned that in the Balkans inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality, but firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too."⁸¹ First, rather than its initial designs for "passing the buck" to the Europeans or to the United Nations in conflicts where there is not a direct threat to the US homeland, by 1999 the administration was willing to act militarily to buttress its vision of America as the "indispensable" global leader in charge of defending and expanding a twenty-first-century liberal world order.⁸² Kosovo would be a great test of Washington's role on the world stage, and Clinton was determined to pass it. Clinton explained at length how this war fit into his grand strategic vision about American leadership:

Most of us have this vision of a twenty-first century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with the respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities; within a framework of shared values, shared power, shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation across national lines, against terror, organized crimes, weapons of mass destruction. This vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society—our vulnerability to hatred of the other. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent, at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.⁸³

In his address to the nation explaining his reasons for the war, Clinton highlighted three major ones. Taken together, they constituted the final evolution of his use of force doctrine for the post-Cold War era. The first element was humanitarianism ("protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting

military offensive”), the second one regional stability (“prevent a wider war, to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results”), and the third one strengthening the NATO alliance and maintaining its credibility (“if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were massacred on NATO’s doorstep . . . [that decision] would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.”)⁸⁴ This combination of three needed factors—humanitarian concerns, regional stability concerns, and strong allied support—describes well enough the pattern of interventions in intrastate conflicts that characterized the US post-Cold War strategy. The interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo fit all three criteria, while noninterventions in conflicts such as Angola, Sudan, or Congo did not.

More than twenty years later, the legacy of America’s world-ordering interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo looks remarkably positive, particularly considering the criticism the Clinton administration incurred at the time from many scholars and Washington analysts. In the short run, the administration accomplished its stated goals of restoring democracy in Haiti and of stopping ethnic cleansing, strengthening NATO, and achieving a sustainable peace in the Balkans. It did so at an extremely low cost in American military casualties and at a modest financial cost thanks to significant contributions from NATO allies. Some critics of America’s post-Cold War interventions, like Barry Posen, correctly point out that Bosnia is not yet necessarily an exemplar of a true multiethnic democracy and that some US and EU troops are still in the Balkans providing security.⁸⁵ However, neither one of these factors should detract from the positive strategic balance of the interventions. First, given the tragic experiences of other multiethnic states ravaged by civil wars, such as Iraq or Syria, the current political arrangements in Bosnia and Kosovo look remarkably positive in relative terms. Second, even the most traditional success stories of US grand strategy, Germany and Japan, required a prolonged troop presence in their aftermath, so the long-term peaceful presence of NATO forces in the Balkans is simply a part of the “world-ordering” role assumed by the United States. Third and most critically, the Clinton administration in the case of Bosnia in fact did try at first to follow the recommendations of *buck-passing* (i.e., leave it to the Europeans to handle it on their own) suggested by noninterventionist scholars like Posen or Layne, only to discover that the European allies were unwilling or unable to intervene without the United States taking a leading military role.⁸⁶

Given that the outcomes of these military interventions were at least decent, and that they were achieved at an affordable cost, why did so many grand strategy scholars criticize Clinton's performance?⁸⁷ One plausible explanation has to do with the emergent nature of Clinton's strategy on this issue. As Gaddis put it, "There is an absence of any grand design. The consistent pattern I see is one of responding to crises. There's a kind of incrementalism and adhocism to things."⁸⁸ Given that most scholars assume good outcomes result from following a planned grand strategy, Clinton's lack of one may have led the scholarly community to underrate his performance. When it came to military intervention in intrastate conflicts, Clinton indeed acted in a way that could not be traced back to his grand strategic planning as found in the *National Security Strategy* documents. However, these interventions appear nonstrategic only if one judges them mainly by looking for evidence of advanced planning, rather than analyzing the possible existence of a successful emergent strategy.

Contrary to the Grand Strategy model, the Emergent Strategy model offers a fairly persuasive explanation of Clinton's positive outcomes in his "world-ordering" military interventions. This model contends that strategy comes from the interplay of actions and events, incorporating lessons learned from trial and error, and that implementation and formulation are not sequential phases but rather interactive processes. Strategic principles become crystallized via actions and are not fully planned in advance. The narrative above provides numerous references to such processes. Moreover, the evidence also leads to the conclusion that the emergent approach was intentional; rather than wavering from crisis to crisis, Clinton's team consciously adopted a flexible approach and focused on learning from experience. Clinton's second National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger, put it best when he explained the administration's approach thus: "We tried to establish common law rather than canon law. We set to build out a new role for the U.S. in the world by experience rather than doctrine."⁸⁹ His predecessor, Tony Lake, echoed the same argument: "I believe that you best promote general goals not through absolute doctrines, but through a determined pragmatism that then can give substance to the general principles."⁹⁰ President Clinton himself offers further support to this view in a remark that was later misinterpreted as evidence for his unwillingness to have a grand strategy. In discussing his approach to the world, he likened himself to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. But rather than accepting the narrative that Containment came out of a grand strategy, Clinton's reading of new biographies of the two presidents led him to conclude that they simply had "powerful instincts about what had to

be done, and they just made it up as they went along.”⁹¹ In the typology developed in this book, they had emergent strategies, just like he did.

Using Airstrikes to Combat Nuclear Proliferation and International Terrorism

In addition to interventions in internal conflicts that threatened regional stability, Clinton also used military force sporadically in the form of airstrikes to combat nuclear proliferation and international terrorism. The threat from WMD in the hands of a rogue regime, such as Iraq or North Korea, was constantly listed in *National Security Strategy* documents as a top national security concern for the United States throughout the 1990s.⁹² In a discussion of the use of military force in a post-Cold War environment in 1993, Madeleine Albright singled out the unique dangers of nuclear weapons proliferation: “The possible aggressive use of such weapons remains perhaps the greatest threat to international peace and our security. Revelations about Iraq’s weapons programs should have shocked even the most complacent among us. Besides Iraq, serious proliferation threats exist from states that fear the future, like North Korea; states that have fallen prey to the extremes of intolerance, such as Iran; and states that are engulfed by regional tension, such as in South Asia.”⁹³ As Frank Gavin recently showed, this focus on nuclear nonproliferation represented a continuation of the “strategies of inhibition” that had characterized American strategy since the development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems capable of reaching the United States.⁹⁴

During his tenure, Clinton used airstrikes to combat the spread of nuclear weapons once, against Iraq, and came very close to doing it a second time, against North Korea. After Saddam Hussein repeatedly interfered with UN inspections in the 1990s, by the end of 1998 the Clinton administration decided to use a very limited amount of military force to degrade Saddam’s nuclear program. The result was Operation Desert Fox, a three-day US-British joint bombing campaign of Iraqi military facilities suspected of nuclear weapons work. In justifying this intervention, the president put it in the context of his vision of Washington acting as the main protector of international peace and regional stability: “If we’re serious about WMD being the biggest threat to the twenty-first century, we’ve got to be ready to use force . . . If Saddam defies the world and we fail to respond, we will face a far greater threat in the future. Saddam will strike again at his neighbors . . . If Saddam can cripple the weapons inspections system and get away with it, he would conclude the international community, led by the United States, has simply lost its will.”⁹⁵

Clinton also considered conducting a military strike against North Korea's nuclear facilities at Yongbyon during a crisis in 1994 after Pyongyang withdrew from the International Atomic Energy Agency, but a last-minute diplomatic effort spearheaded by former president Jimmy Carter diffused the crisis and set the stage for an Agreed Framework for denuclearization of the Peninsula between the United States, Japan, and the Koreans.⁹⁶ That diplomatic arrangement lasted through the end of the Clinton administration, although US officials later came to believe that the North Koreans likely continued development of their nuclear program in secret. North Korea eventually conducted a successful nuclear test in 2006.

On one occasion, the administration also used military airstrikes against another threat that grew in significance during the 1990s, that of global Islamist terrorism.⁹⁷ In retaliation for the terrorist attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, Clinton launched military strikes (Operation Infinite Reach, August 1998) against Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical company in Sudan. The limited airstrikes, however, had no major impact on Al-Qaeda's operations. The group, which had already hit a US military installation before (the 1996 attack at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia), continued conducting attacks against American targets, including one against the USS *Cole* in Yemen, in 2000, and of course initiated preparations for the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, DC.

In addition to these "pinprick" airstrikes in 1998, the administration examined a number of other retaliatory actions against Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda over the next year. As the *9/11 Commission Report* details, the US government considered launching cruise missiles aimed at Bin Laden on a couple of occasions but backed down because of fear of civilian casualties. It briefly discussed the possibility of raids by local allies or US Special Forces, an option also dismissed as too risky.⁹⁸ The terrorist threat was considered dangerous enough to merit a limited military response, in addition to the traditional intelligence and law enforcement approach, but Clinton ultimately viewed Islamist terrorism merely as one of the many challenges to US security and the new world order, without giving it top priority. As the report concluded, "the United States did not, before 9/11, adopt as a clear strategic objective the elimination of al Qaeda."⁹⁹

Clinton's record with using airstrikes to combat nuclear nonproliferation and radical Islamic terrorism is a poor one, marked by an inability to achieve successful outcomes in either of these two policy areas. The president's commitment to "low-cost, low-risk military interventions," what Colin Dueck criticized as "hege-

mony on the cheap,” betrayed an unwillingness to depart from his initial plan to rely on airstrikes as the tactic of choice.¹⁰⁰ And, as Henry Kissinger noted at the time, the air campaigns such as the one against Saddam were themselves bound to fail due to their very limited nature: “I would be amazed if a three-day campaign made a decisive difference . . . [W]e did not do, in my view, enough damage to degrade it [Iraq’s programs for weapons of mass destruction] for six months. It doesn’t make any significant difference because in six months to a year they will be back to where they are and we cannot keep repeating these attacks.”¹⁰¹ In this mini-case, Clinton’s failures confirm the expectations of the Grand Strategy model that poor strategic outcomes are likely to come from ad-hoc, incremental responses. Even though he seemingly recognized the importance of combating these threats, he did not properly plan for tackling these problems with decisive force, partly out of concern for the domestic political opposition to stronger measures, and as such he left these threats to fester.

NATO Enlargement and US-Russia Relations

Another important element of Clinton’s post-Cold War strategy was the policy of enlarging NATO while at the same time trying to maintain good relations with Russia. In 1994, the members of the alliance agreed at the Brussels Summit to establish the Partnership for Peace in order to encourage closer cooperation between NATO and non-NATO European countries, such as prospective members of the alliance in Central and Eastern Europe. Over the next two years, NATO set criteria for accepting new members, and in the 1996 at the Madrid Summit the organization decided to invite the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary to join the Alliance. A year later, in 1997, President Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a treaty establishing a “NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council” aimed at alleviating some of Moscow’s alleged concerns that NATO’s enlargement would pose a security threat to its own territory. In addition to this formal treaty, throughout the 1990s Clinton built a close personal relationship with Yeltsin and encouraged his efforts to reform Russia’s political and economic institutions in order to pave the way for Russia’s integration into the liberal world order. For example, Clinton lobbied Congress to provide financial assistance in support of Moscow’s economic liberalization program in 1993, and he arranged for Russia to become a member of the G-8 organization of the world’s most important economic powers in 1997, despite their sorry economic record. The positive impact of such economic and diplomatic initiatives, however, was often countered by

the strain in US-Russian relations caused not only by NATO's enlargement but also by the Alliance's bombing campaigns in the Balkans, which Yeltsin criticized because of Russia's historical ties with the Serbs.

Therefore, as stated in its *National Security Strategy*, the Clinton administration pursued a strategic vision for European security focused on the dual goals of strengthening and expanding NATO, on the one hand, while also working with Moscow leaders to promote good relations and politicoeconomic reforms on the other.¹⁰² Strobe Talbott, the main Russia policy expert in the Clinton team, recalls that from the beginning of the administration there was a strategic view that "pan-European integration depended both on the Central Europeans joining the major structures of the West, including NATO, and on Russia's remaining on a reformist track internally and a cooperative track in its foreign and defense policies. These goals were in tension but not necessarily irreconcilable."¹⁰³ President Clinton similarly thought of both goals as part of his grand strategic vision of providing US leadership in pursuit of expanding the politicoeconomic liberal world order: "I came to office convinced that NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: prevent a return to local rivalries, strengthen democracy against future threats, and create conditions for prosperity to flourish."¹⁰⁴ In fact, the president saw the NATO and Russia policies as so tightly related that he even suggested to Yeltsin the possibility of inviting Russia to join NATO at a future date.¹⁰⁵

Much more so than in Washington circles, where it enjoyed broad bipartisan support, the enlargement of NATO was highly controversial at the time in the academic security and strategic studies communities. Gaddis referred to this decision as the prime example of a supposed "grand strategy deficit" that plagued America's post-Cold War foreign policy.¹⁰⁶ Referring to what he calls the Clinton administration's "single most important foreign policy initiative—the decision to expand NATO to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic," Gaddis argued that it violated "strategy principles."¹⁰⁷ Writing in 1998, he expressed a commonly held position inside academia when he urged the Senate, unsuccessfully, to put a hold on the administration's expansion plans: "[Historians]—normally so contentious—are in uncharacteristic agreement: with remarkably few exceptions, they see NATO enlargement as ill-conceived, ill-timed, and above all ill-suited to the realities of the post-Cold War world."¹⁰⁸ On the contrary, two of the highest regarded grand strategy practitioners in Washington, Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, were in favor of it and even criticized Clinton for going too slowly and for being too conciliatory toward Moscow.¹⁰⁹ Critics of NATO en-

largement argued that the decisions were evidence of an incoherent strategic approach because they would harm another priority, US-Russian relations.¹¹⁰ Clinton was accused of making this key decision in an *ad hoc* manner, perhaps under the influence of domestic politics or of an emotional commitment to the historical plight of Eastern European countries, instead of going through a more formal strategic planning process that might have highlighted the perils of this policy.¹¹¹ In other words, as Grand Strategy advocates expected, a poor decision-making process led to a poor policy. Or did it?

First of all, while it is true that the decision-making surrounding NATO's enlargement did not resemble a deliberate strategic planning process, the administration's actions nevertheless fit quite well with the tenets of the Emergent Strategy model. President Clinton first started to lean toward expanding NATO following a series of meetings in April 1993 with President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, Lech Walesa of Poland, and Arpad Goncz of Hungary. The Eastern European leaders made a strong impression on Clinton and led him to start thinking of NATO's enlargement in the East as the logical and necessary application of his grand strategy of Enlargement to Europe's new market democracies.¹¹² Despite this inchoate vision in Clinton's mind, however, when cabinet principals met in October 1993 to debate the merits of this policy, they actually chose to focus on strengthening the Partnership for Peace program rather than moving forward with NATO enlargement.¹¹³ The policy shift toward enlargement only occurred incrementally in the next two years thanks to the efforts of Tony Lake and the newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard Holbrooke, both of whom pushed strongly for enlargement despite the lack of any specific commitment from Clinton as to when to start admitting new states or which ones to invite.¹¹⁴

In a pattern of behavior supporting an Emergent Strategy explanation, the formulation and implementation processes during NATO's enlargement were hard to separate. They constantly influenced each other rather than being strictly sequential. For example, Talbott was still working on laying out a detailed rationale for the expansion in 1995, well after Clinton announced in January 1994 in Prague that enlargement was no longer a question of "whether" but "when and why."¹¹⁵ The president's statements at the time support the Emergent Strategy model's contention that the distinction between formulation and implementation of a strategy is often blurred: "This whole year, 1995, was to be devoted for the rationale for expanding NATO and then determining how it might be done, with no consideration whatever of who would be in the included membership

and when that would be done.”¹¹⁶ Another aspect of Emergent Strategy, the role of domestic politics, also played a part in the decision, as the administration arguably timed the first wave of enlargement in 1996 to allow for possible political benefits from the domestic constituencies favoring this policy.¹¹⁷

Second of all, contrary to what critics claimed, the historical record surrounding the debates inside the Clinton administration on NATO enlargement shows that its members were fully aware of the tensions between this policy and their Russia policy and that they took proactive decisions to mitigate these tensions.¹¹⁸ Clinton and Talbott worked assiduously with Yeltsin and his top advisors over a number of years to keep what they referred to as “the Russia train” and the “enlargement train” running on parallel tracks. For example, Clinton delayed the announcement of new NATO members until after the Russian elections of 1996 specifically so as to help Yeltsin’s political fortunes.¹¹⁹ And before the 1997 NATO summit at which the first enlargement offers were made, senior American and Russian officials finished negotiations on the NATO-Russia Founding Act that was meant to alleviate some of Russia’s concerns and set up a more formal partnership between NATO and Moscow. As the former deputy secretary of state Jim Steinberg recalls, “You had the same voices from the outside, the argument that Kennan was making in *Foreign Affairs*, Strobe [Talbott] was making internally in the government, so it’s not like people didn’t know the argument. It was a question of which is the better course: accommodate the Russians, and dismay the Central and Eastern Europeans; or, deal with the problem with the insecurity and the integration of Eastern Europeans and then try to manage the Russian relation. And so the two debates were, which is more important, and which should you prioritize?”¹²⁰

Therefore, rather than not being aware of the potential trade-offs and of the tensions between their competing goals, as its critics claimed, the Clinton administration simply chose its priorities differently than many academic experts recommended. Was Clinton right to do so?

In the short run, NATO’s enlargement successfully achieved its stated objectives of strengthening the stability of Central and Eastern Europe and of securing the political and economic freedoms gained by those states with the end of the Cold War. No country admitted to NATO later reneged on its commitment to free-market democracy and peaceful relations with its neighbors, even though Hungary’s current leader Viktor Orban has unfortunately shown some signs of moving into an authoritarian direction.¹²¹ Moreover, as William Wohlforth has shown, most of the dire predictions by opponents of the NATO enlargement

have failed to come to pass.¹²² Expanding NATO did not cause Russia to form a counterbalancing alliance with China against the United States. In fact, after 9/11 Bush and Putin cooperated relatively closely on a number of important security issues involving the War on Terror despite another round of NATO enlargement in 2004, including even the Baltic States. Similarly, the military and financial burden of expanding NATO, another counterargument to enlargement, also paled in comparison to the annual defense expenditures of the United States. Rather than representing a drain on NATO resources, in fact, the newly admitted members contributed troops to the US-led war in Iraq even as many of the older NATO members refused to do so.

In the longer term, given Russia's recent territorial aggression against non-NATO members Ukraine and Georgia, the decision to enlarge NATO provides a strong bulwark against further Russian expansionism in Europe and against an unraveling of the US-guaranteed world order established in the post-Cold War era, thus showing the strategic value of having enlarged NATO when Russia was helpless to stop it. It is easy to imagine how much more vulnerable the Eastern European states would have been in the aftermath of Russia's military invasion of Crimea in 2014, and how much more the United States' and European Union's interests in the region's stability would have been threatened, if there had been no NATO enlargement during the 1990s. At the same time, however, these recent developments also point to the fact that in the long term Clinton's efforts to integrate Russia in the liberal world order almost certainly failed.

In conclusion, what does this mixed outcome show about the expectations of the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy models in this mini-case? First, the successful policy of enlarging NATO came about in the aftermath of a decision-making process that was characterized more by emergence and incrementalism than by strategic planning. Second, the administration planned to pursue in parallel the two policies of NATO enlargement and Russian integration, but it failed to achieve the second outcome. Having said that, it seemed clear all along that the administration considers the first one more important than the second one. Could following a grand strategy have allowed for both objectives to be achieved? This is unlikely given, on the one hand, the Kremlin's unwillingness to accept that its former satellite states had become independent nations that could decide which security alliances to join and, on the other, the economic difficulties encountered by Yeltsin that harmed the chances of sustained liberalization. Lastly, could following a more deliberate Grand Strategy process have led the administration to change its mind about its priorities and give up on NATO's

enlargement in order to appease Russia? This is also highly unlikely, based on the contradiction between such a policy and the broader grand strategic vision favored by most of the senior decision makers in the Clinton administration, a vision that regarded the enlargement of democracy and free markets in the former Communist nations as essential to peace and prosperity in post-Cold War Europe.

George W. Bush and the War on Terror

The response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States dominated America's national security policy and strategy during the administration of George W. Bush as the president launched a War on Terror in response to that tragic event. Even though the administration worked on other initiatives as well, such as securing a number of bilateral free trade agreements, revamping foreign aid and a global effort against AIDS, assisting prodemocracy and human rights organizations worldwide, and negotiating a new strategic partnership with India, most of the administration's time and resources were dedicated to a multifront War on Terror. The Bush team adopted a set of strategic principles following 9/11, what came to be known as the Bush Doctrine, and pursued a vigorous and at times controversial global campaign whose overarching goals were to prevent another attack on the United States by a relentless effort to find and kill Al-Qaeda operatives, to reduce the larger threat of a nuclear attack made possible by weapon of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, and address the perceived root causes of radical Islamic terrorism by advancing the cause of political and economic liberalization in the Middle East.

This chapter begins by tracing the development of America's strategy after 9/11 through the lenses of both the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy paradigms. It then analyzes how well Bush's strategy worked in two mini-cases: first, the efforts to combat Al-Qaeda both in the war in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) and also on a global scale; and second, the decisions surrounding the launching and conduct of the war in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom).

The Bush Doctrine: Grand Strategy and Improvisation after 9/11

Scholars and analysts have described the Bush Doctrine in a number of different ways, and there is not much agreement in the literature.¹ Significantly, the administration itself seemed at the time somewhat unsure as to what was and was not part of its strategic framework. When he joined the National Security

Council (NSC) staff in Bush's second term, Peter Feaver recalls, "by 2005 already, if you asked someone what's the Bush Doctrine you could get: preemption, states sponsors of terror will be treated as terrorists, freedom agenda as the answer to terrorism, one regarding development, unilateralism, at one point I counted nine different things that had been called the Bush Doctrine. I was asked to write the unified field theory of what is the Bush Doctrine. What is the logic of all of the things that are listed as the Bush Doctrine?"² Despite Feaver's efforts, the Bush administration did not adopt an overarching document laying out exactly what was and was not part of its "doctrine" in its later years. Having said that, however, this section shows that the following four ideas capture well enough the strategic principles that shaped the Bush administration's actions:

1. Take the fight to the enemy.
2. Make no distinctions between terrorists and the nations that harbor them.
3. Confront threats before they fully emerge.
4. Advance freedom.³

By tracing the origins of each of these elements, this section shows that the first two principles are best understood as short-term emergent improvisations in the aftermath of 9/11, whereas the last two principles were part of a longer-term grand strategy laid out in the 2002 *National Security Strategy* and other speeches.

The first and most important strategic principle adopted by Bush in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was to treat the terrorist attack as an act of war against the United States by a global terrorist network determined to attack again, and consequently to "take the fight to the enemy" in this new global war in order to prevent another attack. On the night of September 11, 2001, Bush told a grieving nation that "Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks."⁴ The next day, he gave his senior Pentagon leadership a sense of what he expected from them: "We believe we are at war and we'll fight it as such. I want us to have the mindset of fighting and winning a war."⁵ Bush's decision to treat 9/11 as an act of war and thus to focus the response on preventing the next attack is viewed by former undersecretary of defense policy Douglas Feith as "strategically the single most important decision the president made in eight years; everything that happened in the war on terrorism was in the service of that."⁶ The administration explicitly drew analogies with the late 1940s period

and decided that the new conflict required a “war frame” analogous to the Cold War framework that emerged during that time.⁷

Nine days after 9/11, following intensive consultations with his administration and his direct involvement in drafting this speech, the president laid out in front of Congress and the public his early strategy for the War on Terror and the first version of what commentators called the “Bush Doctrine.” At first, Bush tackled the basic questions of “Who is the enemy?” and “How are we going to fight and win this war?”

Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them. Our War on Terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success.⁸

In describing the enemy, the president also insisted on separating the radical Islamist ideology embraced by the terrorists from the peaceful version of Islam embraced by most Muslims: “The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends.”⁹

The first principle of the Bush Doctrine emerged in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 based on the president’s instinctive reaction to the situation as well as from the perceived need to take immediate actions to prevent further attacks.¹⁰ According to a senior administration official, “The most important thing that happened was his immediate instinct about what had to be done, and the fact that we weren’t going to dither and study it to death and have a lot of meetings, that we’re going to take this network down.”¹¹ And, as his former speechwriter Michael Gerson observes, Bush’s judgments were “more intuitive and organic than academic” because he did not filter his view of 9/11 through “previously adopted ideological commitments and foreign policy views.”¹² Lastly, former NSC staffer Philip Zelikow’s study of the administration’s strategy during those early stages of the War on Terror also reinforces the emergent nature of the decision-making process: “The pressure of Bush and his advisers was so direct because so much of the response had to be invented and improvised.”¹³

The second principle of the Bush Doctrine emerging in the hours and days

after 9/11 held that “we will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them,” as Bush told the American public from the Oval Office in the evening of the attacks.¹⁴ The president reiterated this idea in the September 20 speech to Congress: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”¹⁵ The phrasing “continues to harbor and support” was carefully debated inside the administration and ultimately chosen by Bush in order to emphasize that even rogue regimes can change their behavior.¹⁶ This precise language is different from a common critique of the Bush Doctrine as relying on forceful regime change because it calls for persuading even rogue states to join the fight against Al-Qaeda.¹⁷ Bush’s public statement that every nation “has a choice to make” was echoed in private conversations, and administration officials even hoped that the Taliban might give up Osama bin Laden if pressed hard enough. Bush wanted to signal military resolve in order to persuade the Taliban to give up Al-Qaeda and also to convince states with a history of supporting terrorism to change their behavior. In addressing the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the president made that point clear: “Let’s hit them hard. We want to signal this is a change from the past. We want to cause other countries like Syria and Iran to change their views.”¹⁸

In addition to the principle that states harboring terrorists should be treated the same as the terrorists themselves, another important issue emerged from the early debates. At an NSC meeting on September 13, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld raised an argument that would become a key part of Bush’s strategy in the War on Terror: “As awful as 9/11 was, it would have been deadlier by orders of magnitude if the attackers had used chemical or (especially) biological or nuclear weapons. Though some terrorist groups might be capable of producing such weapons themselves, a more likely source would be a state supporter. And we knew that the list of leading state supporters of terrorism coincided with the list of so-called rogue states who were notorious for pursuing (and, in case of Iraq, using) weapons of mass destruction.”¹⁹

In the coming weeks and months, the anthrax scare in Washington, combined with reports from Afghanistan that Al-Qaeda had been actively seeking WMDs, raised fears among senior administration officials of a truly catastrophic attack that would, as Vice President Dick Cheney put it, “change history” and potentially destroy America’s constitutional system and way of life.²⁰

This high level of fear inspired by the potential nexus between terrorism and WMDs sets the strategic context for the third principle of the Bush Doctrine, the controversial issue of preemption (or, as some administration critics called it, prevention).²¹ As President Bush put it, “The lesson of 9/11 was that if we waited for a danger to fully materialize, we would have waited too long.”²² This lesson was formalized in the administration’s first major grand strategic design, the 2002 *National Security Strategy* (NSS). Given the controversy this concept caused, the relevant passages addressing preemption are worth quoting in their entirety:

Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents; whose so-called soldiers seek martyrdom in death and whose most potent protection is statelessness. The overlap between states that sponsor terror and those that pursue WMD compels us to action.

We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries. Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means. They know such attacks would fail. Instead, they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction—weapons that can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning.

As was demonstrated by the losses on September 11, 2001, mass civilian casualties is the specific objective of terrorists and these losses would be exponentially more severe if terrorists acquired and used weapons of mass destruction. The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security.

The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction—and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.²³

The Bush Doctrine clearly incorporated the idea of “addressing threats before they fully emerge,” in the sense of not waiting to be attacked again before taking steps to neutralize potential terrorist acts, particularly ones involving the use of WMDs. However, does that mean that preemptive wars of regime change were also a part of the doctrine, as critics such as Stephen Walt contended?²⁴ The architects of the 2002 NSS, admittedly with some reason to do so after the controversies created by the document, deny that the strategy repre-

sented anything like a radical new doctrine for preemptive or preventive war. As Alan Stolberg's detailed study of the formation of NSS documents, "the material on the preemption of terrorists had originally been developed by [Philip] Zelikow in one of his early drafts. [National Security Advisor Condoleezza] Rice deleted some of that material and moved it to the document's WMD section. NSA Rice requested NSC Legal Advisor John Bellinger to review that section in detail and modified it based upon Bellinger's advice."²⁵ This description is confirmed by the accounts of Zelikow and Rice. In writing about the formation of the document, Zelikow contends that "The origins of the famous 'preemption' language itself had little to do with grand strategy. The actual story behind that bit of drafting does not come close to living up to the large inferences that have been drawn from its placement in the document."²⁶ Instead, the term came from one of the lawyers who worried about justifying US interventions in the context of current international law. Rice adds that "Contrary to popular views, the only novel aspect of our articulation of the preemption strategy was the way in which we had to adapt the concept of 'imminent threat' to contemporary realities."²⁷

Lastly, the fourth and the most far-reaching element of the Bush Doctrine was the promotion of freedom and democracy in the Middle East and beyond. This principle envisioned a long-term solution to the War on Terror. President Bush sought to address the "root causes" of the rise of the radical Islamist ideology that was drawing young Muslims to Al-Qaeda. As Michael Gerson explains, the White House gravitated toward the ideas of Princeton scholar Bernard Lewis and other scholars of the Arab world who argued that the lack of political freedom in the Middle East fueled the rise of Al-Qaeda and its affiliates.²⁸ Consequently, a long-term grand strategy for the War on Terror needed to remedy this "freedom deficit" in the region: as the president put it in a speech in 2002,

Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe—because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and to our friends, it would be reckless to accept the status quo.

Therefore, the United States has adopted a new policy, a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East. This strategy requires the same persistence and energy and idealism we have shown before. And it will yield the same results. As in

Europe, as in Asia, as in every region of the world, the advance of freedom leads to peace.

The advance of freedom is the calling of our time; it is the calling of our country.²⁹

This idea of advancing human freedom and democracy as a long-term antidote to the rise of global Islamic terrorism was of course very appealing to the administration because it fit with the traditional US foreign policy focus on promoting democracy abroad as both the right thing to do, in keeping with America's values and moral priorities, and also as the best means to a safer and more prosperous world. Bush made this point clear in an interview: "I believe the United States is *the* beacon of freedom in the world. And I believe we have a responsibility to promote freedom that is as solemn as the responsibility is to protecting the American people, because the two go hand-in-hand."³⁰ Thus, the Bush administration fully embraced this traditional focus of US foreign policy, and it drew on the experiences of the United States and many other cultures around the world to make the case for the expansion of freedom in the Middle East in its 2002 *National Security Strategy*. As the document put it:

America's experience as a great multi-ethnic democracy affirms our conviction that people of many heritages and faiths can live and prosper in peace . . . Today, these ideals are a lifeline to lonely defenders of liberty. And when openings arrive, we can encourage change—as we did in central and eastern Europe between 1989 and 1991, or in Belgrade in 2000. When we see democratic processes take hold among our friends in Taiwan or in the Republic of Korea, and see elected leaders replace generals in Latin America and Africa, we see examples of how authoritarian systems can evolve, marrying local history and traditions with the principles we all cherish. Embodying lessons from our past and using the opportunity we have today, the national security strategy of the United States must start from these core beliefs and look outward for possibilities to expand liberty.³¹

Shortly after its publication, the grand strategy historian John Lewis Gaddis described the Bush Doctrine as an ambitious and coherent "grand strategy of transformation . . . a plan for transforming the entire Middle East: for bringing it, once and for all, into the modern world."³² Therefore, despite the controversies this concept caused after the Iraq War went sour, at the time the long-term grand strategy of using democracy promotion to counter the appeal of Al-Qaeda's ideology seemed to many experts like an ambitious but reasonable grand strategic design.

Fighting Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Beyond

On September 17, President Bush took the first major decisions in the War on Terror. As he told his National Security Council gathered that day, “The purpose of this meeting is to assign tasks for the first wave of the war against terrorism. It starts today.”³³ He then proceeded with a series of initiatives using all tools of power to prevent another attack and take the fight to the terrorists. Secretary of State Colin Powell was directed to issue an ultimatum to the Taliban regime to turn over bin Laden, while Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Hugh Shelton were tasked with developing military plans to attack Afghanistan, should the ultimatum be rejected. At the same time, the president issued broad powers to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to conduct covert operations in more than eighty countries around the world to kill or capture Al-Qaeda-linked terrorists. As Balz and Woodward reported, the day before the NSC meeting the president had already signed a memo in which he

authorized all the steps proposed by [CIA Director George] Tenet at Camp David to destroy bin Laden and his network. The CIA was now empowered to disrupt al Qaeda and other global terrorist networks on a worldwide scale, using lethal covert action to keep the role of the United States hidden in order to protect local allies from a possible political backlash. The finding also authorized the CIA to operate freely and fully in Afghanistan with its own paramilitary teams, case officers, and the newly armed Predator, an unmanned airborne drone that could provide rich video surveillance and fire missiles if necessary.³⁴

Bush also directed Secretary of Treasury Paul O'Neill to develop new tools to curb Al-Qaeda's access to financial markets. In fact, the Treasury Department was the first department to formally launch an antiterror initiative a week later. As a former senior Treasury official recalls: “The first shot [of the War on Terror] was fired September 24, 2001, when the Bush administration froze Al-Qaeda's assets and, through a concerted diplomatic effort, assembled a coalition of 172 countries to join in the freeze—which was essential in preventing terrorists from moving funds from a bank in one country to a bank in another to escape the freeze.”³⁵ Similar major reforms impacted homeland defense: the administration appointed a homeland security adviser and eventually created a Department of Homeland Security by cobbling together disparate government agencies, it shifted the focus of Justice Department and the FBI to the prevention of a terrorist attack as opposed to the traditional focus on the prosecution of perpetra-

tors, it worked with Congress to pass the Patriot Act to assist with intelligence collection, and it created the National Security Agency's Terrorist Surveillance Program.

All of these nonmilitary yet critical components of the War on Terror, many of them still in place, represent essentially emergent adjustments to the dangers of the post-9/11 world. They developed at least initially in incremental fashion in various parts of government and through executive presidential decisions rather than being part of a carefully planned grand strategy. Peter Baker accurately summarizes the hectic atmosphere after the September 20 speech to Congress: "the days that followed the address to Congress were a blur of meetings and decisions, many of them improvisational as Bush and Cheney cobbled together a war plan that combined traditional military action, special forces, diplomacy, law enforcement, financial tools and intelligence operations."³⁶ Nevertheless, despite their improvisational quality, these actions against terrorism were clearly derived from Bush's overarching goal of preventing another attack and the first principle of the Bush Doctrine: taking the fight to Al-Qaeda and relentlessly pursuing them wherever they were.

The second principle of the Bush Doctrine (states harboring terrorists will be treated the same as the terrorists themselves) led to the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan when its leaders refused to hand over bin Laden and remove the Al-Qaeda bases from their territory. On September 26, Bush approved a plan calling for CIA operatives, supported by a small number of US Special Operations Forces, to link up with a group of anti-Taliban local allies loosely organized as the Northern Alliance. Eleven days later, the United States (with British support) started the war in Afghanistan by launching a bombing campaign targeting Taliban forces and Al-Qaeda. The CIA and Special Forces operators embedded with the local allies laser-designated targets for the bombing, which led to a swift success in dislodging the Taliban from large areas of the country and killing scores of Al-Qaeda members. Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, fell on November 13, a little over a month after the start of hostilities, and the last major Taliban stronghold of Kandahar fell on December 7. The Bush administration worked with the United Nations and the international community to set up a provisional government led by former exile Hamid Karzai.³⁷ Washington also worked with NATO to create an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to help the new government establish and maintain security in Kabul. In line with the "advance freedom" fourth principle of the Bush Doctrine, the administration promised to assist in Afghanistan's transition to democracy, although the Department

of Defense continued to rely on a “light footprint” and was reluctant to assume “nation-building” responsibilities similar to what Secretary Rumsfeld and other Pentagon leaders regarded as problematic US missions in Bosnia or Kosovo.³⁸

The overthrow of the Taliban regime deprived Al-Qaeda of its physical and political sanctuary in Afghanistan, destroyed many of its training camps, and killed scores of its members, but nevertheless some of the most important Al-Qaeda leaders successfully fled to Pakistan’s remote Federally Administered Tribal Areas, as did some of the Taliban leadership. Despite the efforts of a small number US Special Forces and their Afghan allies to capture or kill bin Laden and his top lieutenants of the battle of Tora Bora, he escaped capture at that time. In the next few years, the CIA worked closely with the Pakistanis and other foreign partners to catch or kill a number of important Al-Qaeda leaders, including the 9/11 architect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and senior Al-Qaeda leaders Abu Zubaidah and Abu Faraj al Libi.³⁹ These losses degraded the terrorist group’s capabilities, but Al-Qaeda proved very resilient and set up new camps in the poorly-governed Federally Administered Tribal Area region of Pakistan from where they continued to plot global terrorist attacks and to offer inspiration for their growing number of worldwide affiliates.⁴⁰ Having said that, it is also important to highlight that they failed to launch another attack against the American homeland, despite the widespread fear in the aftermath of 9/11 that another attack was only a matter of time. The Taliban leadership, in turn, used the new sanctuary in the tribal areas to launch an insurgency against the new Western-backed democratic government in Kabul, leading to a prolonged counterinsurgency campaign in that country that lasted for the remainder of Bush’s presidency. In fact, the administration approved an increase of ten thousand troops in 2008, on top of the thirty-two thousand troops already in the country, in a move that critics called a belated effort to address the shortcomings of its light-footprint strategy to the war and the fact that the Taliban “were stronger than at any point since they had lost Kabul seven years earlier.”⁴¹

The results of Bush’s response to 9/11 are therefore a mixed bag and the source of much controversy at this relatively early stage in the assessment of his strategic legacy. Keeping this caveat in mind, the course of the war in Afghanistan and of the campaign against Al-Qaeda do suggest that the more successful outcomes are arguably correlated with the short-term emergent improvisations, whereas the shortcomings are associated with the longer-term grand strategic ambitions.

On the one hand, the administration’s immediate forceful response in the days

and weeks after 9/11 successfully launched a series of initiatives using all tools of power (military, intelligence, financial, and diplomatic), which helped prevent another major terrorist attack on US soil that might have fundamentally changed “our way of life” and caused major damage to America’s democratic political system. Just as importantly, Bush did that with only small sacrifices in civil liberties (particularly electronic privacy rights) and without any recourse to anti-Islamic rhetoric or scapegoating of Muslims. This restraint is all the more impressive when one considers the reactions of then Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump after the much smaller-scale terrorist attack in St. Bernardino, CA, in 2015, and the damage to American civic life that President Trump’s rhetoric and actions have caused since he entered office. Despite its later difficulties, the initial military campaign in Afghanistan deprived Al-Qaeda of its safe haven in that country at a very small cost in US troops and treasury, and the continued relentless effort by US intelligence agencies and their partners to kill or capture Al-Qaeda leaders worldwide kept the pressure on the terrorist group and foiled numerous other plots around the world.⁴² In 2006, *The Atlantic* even ran a cover simply titled “We Won,” although there still remained some debate in the counterterrorism community on how far the extensive damage done to Al-Qaeda’s “Central Core” had hurt “Al-Qaeda 2.0,” a looser network of radical Islamist organizations that evolved after bin Laden’s tightly-controlled group had been degraded.⁴³ Most of these successes stemmed from the improvised elements of the Bush Doctrine adopted by the president as part of his short-term response to 9/11, more specifically his decisions to use the “war frame” for this conflict, to take the fight to the enemy, and to treat regimes supporting terrorists the same as the terrorists themselves.

On the other hand, the longer-term vision of advancing freedom in Afghanistan has been far less successful, at least from the point of view of 2017. Broadly speaking, there are two types of criticisms raised to explain this poor strategic outcome, and both of them suggest that an Emergent Strategy approach might have allowed the administration to achieve more successful long-term outcomes. The first set of arguments is well captured by former CIA deputy director Michael Morell in his memoirs: “So how did our initial victory in Afghanistan—in only months—turn into the longest war in American history? It happened because at some point our goal shifted from ensuring that al Qaeda would not again be able to use Afghanistan as a launching pad for attacks against the homeland to something else. The mission changed to trying to permanently alter Afghan poli-

tics and society. It was an impossible task to turn Afghanistan's tribal society and culture into a liberal democracy."⁴⁴

According to this line of thought, the administration erred in moving from the initial (emergent) principle of simply denying safe haven to terrorists to the more long-term grand strategic vision of promoting democracy. The second type of criticism, raised by terrorism analysts such as Seth Jones, is that the administration under-resourced the war by failing to commit larger number of troops and financial resources to support a full-scale nation-building mission in Afghanistan.⁴⁵ Former administration officials supporting the light-footprint approach, such as Secretary Rumsfeld, rebutted this type of criticism by claiming that a heavier US force presence, in addition to being very expensive, would have also been counterproductive because it would have stirred anti-Americanism among the Afghan population, much like such an approach stirred anti-Soviet feelings when the USSR used a heavy-footprint approach when it invaded the country in 1979.⁴⁶ While Rumsfeld's rebuttal is arguably an appropriate justification as to why the administration did not put more troops in the country in the initial stages of the conflict, his response does not address the failure to learn and adapt to the deteriorating situation in later years. Therefore, even if one assumes that the administration's long-term grand strategic goal was achievable, an emergent strategy to achieve that goal might have led to better results than sticking to the initial plan of the light footprint even when the course of the war was going in the wrong direction.

The Iraq War and Its Aftermath

As the war in Afghanistan seemed to be winding down after the fall of the Taliban regime and the routing of Al-Qaeda, the Bush administration shifted its focus toward confronting the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. In January 2002, President Bush used the State of the Union Address to outline the next stage of the War on Terror: "Our nation will continue to be steadfast and patient and persistent in the pursuit of two great objectives. First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice. And, second, we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world."⁴⁷ The president singled out Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as states whose pursuit of WMDs represented a dangerous threat to the security of the United States in the new, post-9/11 world: "By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose

a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.”⁴⁸ And of the three states listed in the speech, the threat from Saddam seemed the most multifaceted and the most urgent: “Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens—leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections—then kicked out the inspectors.”⁴⁹

The president finished his speech with a restatement of the third principle of the Bush Doctrine: “We’ll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons.”⁵⁰ Over the next fifteen months, the Bush administration debated different options to persuade Saddam to fully disclose his WMD program. The United States and other Western intelligence communities erroneously believed that Saddam possessed stockpiles of WMDs, a fateful mistake that made the overall threat from Iraq appear more urgent than would have been the case otherwise. In addition to the inherent difficulties of gathering intelligence from a closed society, another reason for this intelligence failure was that, in a profound and inexplicable underestimation of US resolve, Saddam revealed after his capture that he wanted to appear to have WMDs in order to deter Iran, all the while believing that the United States would not go through with its threat of military action.

The threat of WMDs represented the main justification for the Iraq War, in keeping with the second and third principles of the Bush Doctrine. But there was also a secondary reason, advancing freedom in the Middle East, drawing on the fourth principle of the doctrine. In August 2002, National Security Adviser Rice circulated a memo (“Iraq: Goals, Objectives, Strategy”) that captures the administration’s different reasons for going to war:

- Eliminate Iraqi WMD, their means of delivery and associate programs, to prevent Iraq from breaking out of containment and become a more dangerous threat to the region and beyond;
- End Iraqi threats to its neighbors;

- Stop the Iraqi government's tyrannizing of its own population;
- Cut Iraqi links to and sponsorship of international terrorism;
- Maintain Iraq's unity and territorial integrity; and
- Liberate the Iraqi people from tyranny and assist them in creating a society based on moderation, pluralism, and democracy.⁵¹

Some critics of the administration, such as John Mearsheimer, argued that the Iraq War was part of a grand strategy of "bringing democracy at the point of a gun"⁵² to the Middle East. However, this type of argument actually overstates the importance of the fourth principle of the Bush Doctrine (advancing freedom) compared to the first three factors.⁵³ The first three principles regarding the perceived threat from Saddam were more important in launching the war than the fourth principle, while the fourth principle became most relevant in shaping how the occupation was handled after the removal of Saddam's regime.⁵⁴ The sequence of how each element of the Bush Doctrine shaped the administration's actions at different times is critical for understanding the administration's decision-making. At a meeting shortly before the invasion, Bush asked his senior advisers what kind of a leader should replace Saddam Hussein after the war. The decision was made that rather than installing a more friendly military dictator, the United States owed the Iraqi people the chance to help them build a democratic state. And at that point, as Steve Hadley remembers in an interview, "As we thought about those ideas, we thought that it was not just for the Iraqi people, but we came to this idea that if you could build a democratic peace in Iraq where Sunni, Shia and Kurds were all working together in a democratic framework for the future of the country, that would be a good example for the Middle East. But the reason we went to war with Saddam was the national security concerns and the credibility of the international community and of the United States."⁵⁵

Another scholarly misunderstanding of the Bush Doctrine spurred by the Iraq War was the idea that the administration adopted a grand strategy centered on preventive war and regime change, as Walt and others put it.⁵⁶ As already discussed above, the idea of preempting threats before they fully materialize emerged as a principle of the Bush Doctrine in the aftermath of 9/11, and the administration considered what Rice and others described as "anticipatory self-defense" to be an important adaptation to the post-9/11 world. However, it would be an unwarranted overstatement to suggest that "preventive war" or "regime change" was the new *modus operandi* of US foreign policy. As she put it in an interview in 2002, "Anticipatory defense should not be used as a cover for aggres-

sion. It really should be a rare occurrence.”⁵⁷ Moreover, Rice went on to clarify, “there is a difference between preemption of capabilities and regime change. They are not the same. You may more often, as the United States has done in the past, preempt capability. But preempting for regime change ought to be a very rare occurrence.”⁵⁸

There is no available evidence to suggest that the administration prepared for, or even contemplated, a “regime change” preventive war against any other country except for Iraq, as could be expected if this had indeed been the new grand strategy or use of force doctrine for the War on Terror. On the contrary, at the Department of Defense, an analytical exercise conducted in 2002 developed a grid of the states with WMD ambitions that might provide them to terror groups and arrayed for each the range of options on how to convince them to end support for terrorism and drop the pursuit of WMDs. The policies ranged from “diplomatic measures through economic pressure and multinational sanctions—to blockade, limited strikes, and regime change by military force.” The study, for example, found Syria and Libya to be likely to respond to diplomatic pressure based on their history. For Iran and North Korea, there were still plenty of diplomatic maneuvers, UN actions, economic sanctions, and other operations short of war. It was only with respect to Iraq, Feith writes, echoing Rice and Bush, that “the United States had exhausted virtually every means short of war to end the danger from the Iraqi regime.”⁵⁹

Having established that the administration did not adopt a preemptive war standard as a general doctrine, the more difficult question is whether the decision-making in the specific instance of the Iraq War was based on the logic of preemption. Different members of the administration disagree on this issue, and the record provides support both for and against this proposition. On the one hand, the president’s rhetoric quoted above clearly shows that the importance of preempting a possible WMD-related terrorist attack linked to Saddam’s capabilities played a big part in his decision to disarm the Iraqi leader one way or another. On the other hand, some of the most influential arguments in favor of the war were not about pre-empting Iraq from developing WMDs that could end up in the hands of terrorists but rather about maintaining US credibility as a world leader, about the international community’s credibility in future cases of rogue states disregarding UN resolutions, and about avoiding further threats to the Middle East and international stability caused by Saddam’s erratic behavior and his aggressive tendencies. Condoleezza Rice was the only senior adviser asked directly by Bush whether he should go to war, and her answer had little if

anything to do with preemption. Rather, her reasoning was based on protecting the credibility of the United States and of the international community. In Bob Woodward's reporting,

"What do you think?" he had asked her a few weeks before. "Should we do this?" "Yes," she said. "Because it isn't American credibility on the line, it is the credibility of everybody that this gangster can yet again beat the international system." As important as credibility was, she said, "Credibility should never drive you to do something you shouldn't do." But this was much bigger, she advised, something that should be done. "To let this threat in this part of the world play volleyball with the international community this way will come back to haunt us someday. That is the reason to do it."⁶⁰

Her deputy at the time and future successor, Stephen Hadley, echoed the same arguments in an interview:

I believe that it was not a war of preemption. I do not believe it was a war of choice. I believe it was a war of last resort, that the international community over twelve years had exhausted all the tools it had to deal with Saddam Hussein. If after all this run-up with Saddam—a war, a ceasefire, seventeen UN Security Council resolutions, no-fly zones, dumb sanctions and smarter sanctions, use of military force against him in 1998, regime change being formal policy of our government since 1998, and Saddam's continued defiance—if after all of that we would say "that's okay, we didn't mean it," we'd never be able to deal with any other outlaw dictator in the future.⁶¹

Advocates of the war in the top three positions at the Department of Defense had also made arguments for the war that had nothing to do with preemption. Secretary Rumsfeld wrote a memo at the time stating that the focus on WMDs was distracting attention from other equally important reasons for removing Saddam:

Intelligence evidence about WMD had a way of taking pride of place in the litany of reasons for going to war. In fact, that should have been only one of the many reasons. There was a long list of other charges against Saddam Hussein's regime—its support for terrorism, its attacks on American pilots in the no-fly zones, its violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, its history of aggression, and its crimes against its people . . . Obviously the focus on WMD to the exclusion of almost all else was a public relations error that cost the administration dearly.⁶²

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz believes that the introduction of the preemption language in the 2002 NSS in fact “misrepresented what the issue was. You start talking about preemption and suddenly it appears to be the reason to go after Iraq, as opposed to saying that for twelve years Saddam has been violating the terms of the original ceasefire, and finally the time has come to put up or shut up. Basically, if the UN resolutions mean anything, you have to insist on compliance with them.”⁶³ Feith also wrote that the war was about much more than the WMD issue.⁶⁴

Lastly, as historian Melvyn Leffler’s recent study of the Bush administration observed, “In the run-up to war, Bush was the key decision-maker . . . Future histories of the Iraq War will need to put Bush at the very center of the administration that he headed.”⁶⁵ Therefore, his account for what drove him to invade Iraq is an important piece of evidence worth examining, with the usual caveat that statesmen have certain biases in how they present information in their memoirs. One thing that is fairly clear from the president’s recollection is that 9/11 led him to see Saddam’s case differently: “Before 9/11, Saddam was a problem America might have been able to manage. Through the lens of the post-9/11 world, my view changed . . . The lesson of 9/11 was that if we waited for a danger to fully materialize, we would have waited too long. I reached a decision: We would confront the threat from Iraq, one way or another.”⁶⁶ As he further explained his rationale, he laid out the unique nature of the Iraqi threat, providing support for the view that this case was a multifaceted threat: “There were state sponsors of terror. There were sworn enemies of America. There were hostile governments that threatened their neighbors. There were nations that violated international demands. There were dictators who repressed their people. And there were regimes that pursued WMD. Iraq combine all those threats.”⁶⁷ To sum up the discussion on the connections between the Bush Doctrine and the launching of the Iraq War, the available evidence suggests that the war had multiple causes rather than being simply an implementation of a single element of the doctrine, whether preemption or democracy promotion.

After spending the fall and winter of 2002 pursuing in vain a diplomatic solution at the United Nations, President Bush ordered US troops to attack Iraq on March 19, 2003. The initial military operation to defeat Saddam’s regime was stunningly successful, and US and allied forces liberated Baghdad by April 9, 2003, with a very small number of casualties. After the removal of Saddam, President Bush declared, “our central objective became helping the Iraqis develop a democracy that could govern itself, sustain itself, and serve as an ally in the war

on terror.”⁶⁸ Over the next several years, however, former regime members and foreign jihadists launched a savage insurgency in Iraq that threatened to transform the country into a failed state mired in civil war and squander the chance to leave behind a stable and democratic state. Between 2003 and 2006, the United States suffered more and more casualties and spent hundreds of billions of dollars without making much progress toward its objectives.⁶⁹

The security situation continued to deteriorate until Bush decided to change course away from the “as Iraqis stand up, we stand down,” training-focused military strategy and adopt what came to be known as the “Surge” counterinsurgency strategy in 2007 based on the principles of “clear, hold and build” made possible by a heavier US military presence.⁷⁰ General David Petraeus, the new military commander, successfully incorporated some of the emergent strategic learning that was already occurring on the ground. Colonels H. R. McMaster in Tal Afar and Sean McFarland in Anbar province showed the importance of providing security for the local population and, respectively, of making deals with Sunni sheiks and the future members of the Sons of Iraq, two crucial components of the Surge.⁷¹ Thanks to the change in strategy and the extra thirty thousand troops authorized by the president, the US military turned things around in dramatic fashion, and by the end of the Bush presidency violence in Iraq had decreased to its lowest levels since 2003. The improvement in the security situation, and the renewed political progress between the different Iraqi factions, appeared to bring the goal of a stable, democratic state close to being accomplished by January 2009, when Bush left office.⁷²

It is too early to judge the definitive long-term strategic impact of the Iraq War given the continued uncertainty about Iraq’s path. Its short-term results offer some tentative evidence in favor of the Emergent Strategy model and against the Grand Strategy model, but there is also some other evidence pointing in an opposite direction. In many ways, the part of the war most associated with a grand strategy, the democracy promotion component, proved to be the most costly and hardest to accomplish. Critics of the administration from the Grand Strategy school of thought, such as Hal Brands, accused the Bush team of “severe deficiencies of planning, process and execution” to explain the poor strategic outcomes of the Iraq’s war aftermath.⁷³ Such an argument attempts to defend the Grand Strategy model by blaming the postinvasion failure on the Bush administration’s alleged lack of competence in strategic planning and execution. Criticisms along these lines imply that better advanced planning could have led to more successful postwar stability operations. However, former Pentagon officials

argued that much more planning had taken place than was acknowledged by the critics but that intelligence failures regarding the behavior of Iraq's post-Saddam military apparatus, along with bureaucratic differences between the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the CIA on the role of external vs. internal Iraqi opposition groups in the makeup of the new government, are the larger reasons for the postinvasion failures.⁷⁴ According to proponents of Emergent Strategy, such difficulties are to be expected given the nature of US government bureaucracies, the difficulty of accurate intelligence predictions, and the inherent unpredictability of war that even the most elaborate strategic planning cannot eliminate.

Rather than blaming them for poor planning and execution, the more persuasive critique of the Bush administration is that they did not learn and adapt quickly enough to the deteriorating situation on the ground. It took four years of things more or less steadily getting worse in Iraq, 2003–2006, before the administration finally changed course in a manner congruent with the Emergent Strategy paradigm. The success of the Surge came as the result of the emergent learning and adaptation that took place in 2006–2008, and it was driven by the focus on defeating Al-Qaeda in Iraq by denying them physical sanctuary, on protecting the population, and on working with the available local allies, not by a Grand Strategy-inspired focus on political democratization. President Bush argued in his memoirs that he “refused to give up on our plan before it had a chance to work,” but he also admitted that his delay in changing the strategy was a costly error of statecraft.⁷⁵

Having said that, one thing the Grand Strategy model should not be blamed for is the initial decision to invade Iraq. As the discussion of the reasons for launching the war has shown, the decision to remove Saddam was not meant to validate a new grand strategy of preventive war or regime change. Instead, it represented a more narrow response to the specific threat from Saddam's WMD ambitions, his history as an enemy of the United States, and his potential future support for global terrorism. The democratization component (the fourth element of the Bush doctrine) played only a secondary role in the initial decision. The decision was indeed significantly shaped by the third principle of the Bush Doctrine that in the post-9/11 world threats would be dealt with before they fully emerged, but how such threats would be addressed remained to be decided on a case-by-case basis; according to the calculus of the Bush team, in the specific case of Iraq all other nonmilitary options had been exhausted. Moreover, the chapter also showed that the war had other causes unrelated to the issue of preemption,

and there is also some evidence of an emergent process leading to the invasion. A detailed “behind-the-scenes” account in *The Washington Post* and an examination by John Prados and Christopher Ames of declassified documents both described the initial decisions to confront Saddam as “emerging in an ad hoc fashion.”⁷⁶ Rumsfeld at one time remembered events in a similar way: “While the President and I had many discussions about the war preparations, I do not recall his ever asking me if I thought going to war with Iraq was the right decision. The process toward war had been incremental.”⁷⁷

All in all, a full judgment on what the Iraq War tells us about the two paradigms of strategy-making depends on the way one assesses the ultimate strategic legacy of that decision. Even though the Iraqi dictator had no stockpiles of WMDs, as expected by prewar intelligence estimates, administration officials and their supporters maintained that his ouster and the defeat of Al-Qaeda in Iraq during the Surge represented hard-earned American successes in the global War on Terror.⁷⁸ The administration’s many critics strongly disagree with that assessment, and this controversy is likely to go on for many years to come until the heated politicized atmosphere subsides.⁷⁹ The same can also be said about the overall success of Bush’s strategy in the War on Terror, and some reassessments may already be underway in light of the important setbacks brought about by his successor’s decision to reverse much of the Bush strategic framework.⁸⁰

Shape or Adapt?

Improving the Making of American Strategy

The question animating this book was whether pursuing a long-term grand strategy is more likely to lead to foreign policy success than relying on improvisation, adaptation, and emergent learning. The case studies examined in this book do not fully vindicate either one of the two paradigms, but they do provide more support to the Emergent Strategy model than previously acknowledged by much of the political science scholarship dominated by the Grand Strategy model. Some of the more successful foreign policy initiatives over the past seventy years, such as the Truman Doctrine, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Marshall Plan, Ronald Reagan's diplomacy with Mikhail Gorbachev, the Gulf and Balkan Wars, the early response to 9/11, and the surge in Iraq all followed from an Emergent Strategy approach to foreign policy. Having said that, other reasonably successful developments came from a decision-making process shaped by a grand strategy, such as the NSC-68-inspired military buildup and NATO rearmament under Harry S. Truman, the opening to China, the Reagan-era Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and ideological pressure on the Soviet Union, or the expansion of NATO and the free trade agreements achieved in the post-Cold War era.

The failures of US foreign policy during this time were similarly found both during times when US leaders focused on implementing a long-term grand strategy and when they adopted a more emergent approach. Examples of the former include Dwight D. Eisenhower's ill-fated doctrine of massive retaliation and the New Look as a cost-effective approach to Containment, the Nixon-Kissinger Détente with the Soviet Union as a means of putting in place a long-term "structure of peace" between the two superpowers, the support offered by many US presidents to Third World dictators in the name of anti-Communist Containment, and arguably the focus on democracy promotion in the Middle East as an antidote to Islamic radicalism. As for failures coming from an emergent process, the book highlighted Bill Clinton's approach to weapons of mass destruction and

Table 2 Successes and failures of Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy

	Grand Strategy	Emergent Strategy
<i>Success</i>	Idea of long-term containment of the USSR	Truman Doctrine
	Nixon's opening to China	Formation of NATO and the Marshall Plan
	Reagan-era SDI and the ideological pressure put on the Soviet Union	Reagan's diplomacy with Gorbachev
	Expansion of NATO	US post-Cold War "world-ordering" military interventions in the Gulf War and the Balkan Wars
	Free trade agreements achieved in the post-Cold War era	Bush's early response to 9/11 and the Surge in Iraq
<i>Failure</i>	Eisenhower's doctrine of Massive Retaliation and the New Look as a cost-effective approach to Containment	Clinton's incremental approach to WMDs and international terrorism
	Détente with the Soviet Union as a means of putting in place a long-term "structure of peace" between the two superpowers	The "light footprint" approach to the War in Afghanistan.
	Support offered to Third World dictators in the name of anti-Communist Containment	
	Bush Doctrine and democracy promotion in Iraq	

international terrorism, and the shortcomings of a "light footprint" approach to the war in Afghanistan.

The mixed outcomes in the case studies indicate that, while both models of decision-making have had positive results at different times, neither one is able to consistently lead to successful strategic performance. Therefore, this study shows that incoming presidential administrations should be somewhat skeptical of the prevalent idea that they must formulate a new grand strategy as soon as they take office. Despite calls by proponents of the Grand Strategy paradigm to prioritize the formulation of a National Security Strategy at the beginning of an administration, the strategic record of such long-term grand strategic plans formulated early on in a president's tenure is quite checkered.¹ While Reagan was arguably

successful in setting in place some policies to accomplish one of his overarching long-term goals, other presidents, like Eisenhower or Richard Nixon, formulated grand strategic designs that failed to anticipate major shifts in world politics and therefore arguably hindered rather than helped the conduct of US foreign policy later in their tenure. Pursuing a long-term strategy based on concepts that may be sound in theory but fail to work in practice, such as Eisenhower's Massive Retaliation and Nixon and Kissinger's *Détente*, can offer leaders a false sense of confidence that they are doing what is needed "for the long haul" and prevent them from adapting in the face of unexpected developments. If even Kissinger's geopolitical brilliance, or the kind of rigorous strategic planning process conducted in Project Solarium by a president with Eisenhower's national security background and benefitting from the input of the top civilian and military minds in the US government, could not come up with a more successful grand strategic innovation, then how much confidence can we really have in the usefulness of following long-term plans?

One of the major obstacles to designing a successful grand strategy, even leaving aside issues of implementation, is the difficulty of predicting the threats and opportunities presented by the international security environment past the more immediate future. Almost by definition, setting about the pursuit of an overarching long-term goal requires an accurate prediction *ex ante* of what would be such an achievable goal, or, to use a slippery term that is unfortunately ubiquitous in the foreign policy literature, what is "realistic." When strong proponents of the Grand Strategy model, such as Will Martel or Terry Deibel, advise leaders to articulate and implement a grand strategy that sets realistic objectives and then match required means to the desired ends, they implicitly assume that policymakers are capable of making good enough predictions about the future to know what kind of goals are achievable and at approximately what cost.² Such confidence in strategic foresight, claim skeptics of long-range planning, is unsupported by the social science research on the accuracy of expert predictions.³ Therefore, the Grand Strategy school's policy advice to set realistic long-term goals and then plan adequately to achieve them by setting priorities and making hard choices is persuasive in theory but hard to follow in practice. To take one example, can leaders really know in advance which goals are realistic and which are not when it comes to questions at the level of grand strategy? Did Reagan's early talk of ending (or winning) the Cold War sound any more realistic *at the time* than his views on the abolition of nuclear weapons? The first outcome came to pass while the second one clearly did not, so focusing on realistic vs. unrealistic goals,

post facto, does not tell us very much about the quality of strategic performance. When it comes to long-range strategic planning, policymakers are usually “driving in the dark,” as Richard Danzig put it. In his study of the Pentagon’s strategic planning efforts, Danzig lists a daunting number of challenges facing long-range forecasts of the grand strategic environment: “Accurate prediction would need to anticipate changes in, among other things, technologies, economies, institutions, domestic and international politics and, of course, the nature of warfare. Each of these alone would be imponderable. Getting them all right at once is wildly improbable. Worse still, the evolution of these variables is complex and nonlinear.”⁴

Some Grand Strategy proponents of course acknowledge that prediction is very hard when it comes to the shape of the international security environment in the long run, but they nevertheless contend that leaders can design grand strategies and then remain flexible in their implementation. Such reasonable advice, however, turns out to be very difficult to follow in practice. Historical studies of grand strategy often criticize past efforts for failing to adapt the initial designs and plans in the face of unexpected developments: as Williamson Murray put it, “the problem that confronts most flawed strategies is that in a non-linear world of complexity and uncertainty, most policy makers and military leaders follow a linear course.”⁵ Applying the Cold War grand strategic framework to the expansion of the Korean War north of the thirty-eighth parallel, the view of Communism as a monolith, or the support of Third World dictators in the name of anti-Communism and therefore the failure to support the liberal democratic activists in these countries, all these policies show how difficult it is for leaders to remain flexible in their policy choices once a grand strategy is firmly in place.

The case studies also highlighted how strategic success comes from learning on the job at least as much as it does from advanced planning. Therefore, leaders should come into office expecting that their initial strategic plans will have to be changed, sometimes dramatically; how well they adapt to the unexpected events to come, as opposed to how successfully they implement their initial designs, will largely determine their foreign policy legacy. For example, some of the major successes of the early Cold War period, such as the Truman Doctrine, NATO, and the Marshall Plan, followed from Truman’s emergent learning process in the first few years of his tenure after aggressive moves by the Soviets persuaded him that continuing Roosevelt’s more conciliatory approach toward Stalin would be fruitless. Similarly, in the late Cold War period, Reagan’s flexibility and willingness to change his approach in dealing with the unexpectedly reformist new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev made a significant contribution to the peaceful ending

of that conflict. On the contrary, in cases where presidents focused mostly on implementing a carefully planned long-term grand strategy they developed early on, such as Eisenhower's New Look and Nixon's *Détente*, the lack of adaptation to unexpected shifts in the external environment plagued Washington's foreign policy-making and led to disappointing outcomes. Therefore, the White House decision-making style most conducive to successful strategic performance is *not* one that is primarily intended to facilitate the implementation of a president's initial goals and preferred policies, as much of the Grand Strategy school's literature on strategic planning recommends, but rather one that best fosters learning and adaptation in the face of inescapable surprises.⁶ The focus of strategic planning efforts, therefore, ought to be less on designing and implementing a long-term grand strategy and more on assuring a continuous reassessment of the administration's major policy initiatives in the areas deemed most critical to US national security interests. Equally important, such strategy reassessments ought to be followed by vigorous efforts to implement the necessary policy adaptations recommended by the reviews. The strategy review that eventually led to the surge strategy in Iraq represented an excellent example of bottom-up learning based on trial and error, incorporating those insights into a new overall approach, and providing the new strategy with the needed resources to succeed.

If emergent learning is at least as important for strategic success as following a grand strategy, and sometimes even more so, then scholars and policy analysts should move away from judging an administration's performance based primarily on the coherence of its initial strategic plans and on how effectively such plans are implemented. The most common ways for Grand Strategy scholars to explain poor results are to either blame an administration's initial plans for being incoherent or unrealistic or, alternatively, to blame the implementation of what otherwise might have been a sound strategic plan. In short, policymakers are faulted for either a poor conceptual strategy or for inept implementation. However, if one insight that emerges from the case studies is that often the ultimate strategic performance depends on the extent to which emergent learning occurred, then scholars should also judge leaders by this important metric when they analyze the foreign policy-making process. Another implication of this finding for the Grand Strategy literature is that at least as much research should be directed at studying how leaders successfully learn and adapt as at examining alternative grand strategies or ways to implement them.

Another theme that emerges from the book is that, unfortunately, more often than not leaders face a difficult tradeoff between short-term success and long-

term success. Policies that achieve short-term goals may invite backlash in the longer term, while policies that are highly controversial at the time can lead to positive outcomes later on. Here, the two models point in different directions: leaders focused more on Grand Strategy tend to adopt the long-term view, while those who adopt an Emergent Strategy style are more likely to adopt short-term, incremental policies that respond to the immediate crisis without as much concern for long-term consequences. Hence, two of the hardest challenges for leaders are deciding when to persist with unpopular decisions in the hope of being “vindicated by history” and, conversely, when to adopt a short-term response that addresses the more immediate problem without worrying too much about the potential long-term negative consequences.⁷ The results of the case studies addressed in this book do not show unambiguously that one approach is more successful than the other, which in and of itself is remarkable because it warns policymakers of the perils they will face depending on which choice they make. For example, George W. Bush’s emergent approach to Afghanistan was successful in the short run in routing Al-Qaeda, but one consequence of the “light footprint” improvisational approach, critics contended, was a failure to properly plan for a long-term reconstruction of that country which in turn contributed to higher long-term costs in blood and treasure; however, Reagan’s improvisational approach to Gorbachev in the late 1980s probably worked much better than an approach that reflected more closely the elaborated grand strategic plans his team designed in the first term. Conversely, a strong commitment to the long-term grand strategy of Containment led the Truman administration to persevere in its military commitment to the Korean War in its later years despite the loss of domestic support for the conflict, a successful decision vindicated by history, whereas the same commitment to Containment later on arguably led future American presidents to a military commitment to South Vietnam, a decision that turned out to have been a mistake in both the short and the long run.

Given that both the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy frameworks have led to successful outcomes of different times, as well as to failures, is there a rule of thumb for leaders to decide when to go in one direction and when to go in the other? Future scholarship on the making of strategy and foreign policy could profitably build on this work by examining the potential variables and conditions that might determine when one approach is preferable to the other.⁸ Some such plausible variables include the predictability of the external environment (low vs. high uncertainty), the time horizon chosen by the leaders (short-term vs. long-term focus), the domestic political environment (low vs. high levels of partisan

discord over foreign policy), or the president's own decision-making style (structured vs. improvisational).

For example, in the business literature, the level of uncertainty in the external environment is crucial for determining what strategic planning tools are most useful for achieving success. Former McKinsey management consultant Hugh Courtney designed a framework outlining four different levels of strategic uncertainty executives have to confront:

- Level 1, where linear projections are fairly reliable;
- Level 2, where there are a limited number of known possible outcomes;
- Level 3, where there is a range of outcomes with relatively known upper and lower boundaries but no information about the exact options between those boundaries; and
- Level 4, true ambiguity, where “black swan”-type events and wild swings are possible and where prediction is highly unreliable.⁹

Each level requires different decision-making tools. For example, long-term trend analysis and detailed plans are appropriate for level 1, where forecasts are reliable; cost-benefit analysis and game theoretical bifurcated scenarios are suitable for level 2; more open-ended scenario planning is a useful tool for level 3; finally, emergent learning by trial and error and securing multiple “options” on the future (i.e., hedging) are recommended for the highest level of uncertainty. The more the level of uncertainty increases, the more leaders should move from a deliberate strategy-making process based on analysis and advanced planning to one characterized by improvisation and emergent learning.

Could a similar framework be applicable to the practice of foreign policy and national security strategy?¹⁰ The case studies confirmed in some ways this stipulated connection between the level of uncertainty and the applicability of each model. For example, the idea of containing Soviet expansion was based on the prediction that Moscow's ideology would drive it to pursue an aggressive and hostile foreign policy toward the West, something that US leaders in the early Cold War days correctly asserted with a fair amount of certainty and subsequently established a grand strategic principle of opposing Soviet expansionism for the rest of that strategic era. Conversely, in times of higher uncertainty and rapid change, such as the 1990s or the early 2000s, efforts to implement new long-term grand strategic principles were bound to fail, partly because accurately predicting the future challenges for US national security proved to be nearly impossible. At such times, emergent approaches were more likely to succeed, and US actions

grounded in improvisation and emergent learning (such as the Gulf War, the Balkan Wars, and the counterterrorism strategy in the early aftermath of 9/11) proved more successful than actions that were premised on long-term goals, such as the hope to politically liberalize China through economic integration or to diminish the appeal of Islamic global terror groups by spreading freedom in the Middle East. Therefore, contrary to the common argument that grand strategy is well suited for the pursuit of long-term goals, deliberate strategic planning might actually be most helpful in the short and medium term (when uncertainty is usually lower) than in the long run, where levels of uncertainty are much higher and therefore an emergent approach is better suited.

Lastly, the successes and failures examined in this book also indicate that American presidents should avoid the temptation of thinking that a rigorous grand strategic framework can allow them to achieve “more with less” or to protect US national security while ignoring American ideals and values.¹¹ The success record is quite poor for grand strategic designs premised on the assumption that new leaders can achieve the same objectives at a lower cost by relying on a new and different strategic framework that eluded their misguided predecessors. Such examples include Eisenhower’s New Look, which sought to rely on the relatively cheaper deterrence by nuclear massive retaliation and on seemingly inexpensive CIA-led covert operations instead of investing in the full spectrum of military capabilities as Truman did; the Nixon/Kissinger efforts to use détente, arms control treaties, and alliances with Third World dictators in the quest for a multipolar “structure of peace” less dependent on Washington’s global presence; or Clinton’s “assertive multilateralism” concept aimed preserving the new post-Cold War liberal world order by shifting the burden of leadership and the needed resource commitments away from the United States and toward the United Nations and America’s European allies. On the contrary, some of the more successful uses of the Grand Strategy paradigm involved massive military buildups during the Truman and Reagan eras that served Washington well in accomplishing its ultimate goals during the Cold War and beyond.

Relatedly, the case studies also show that senior policymakers should be skeptical of Grand Strategy plans that purport to protect the “national interest” in a way that is counter to American values. In the long term, strategies grounded primarily in security considerations, such as supporting anti-Communist authoritarian leaders in the Third World or ignoring the plight of dissidents in the Soviet bloc in order to placate Moscow, turned out to have been not only morally wrong but also ineffective. The longer-term strategic successes more often than not fol-

lowed from those actions infused with a strong sense of America's ideological commitment to make the sacrifices needed to lead and defend the free world against the forces of authoritarianism. Unlike some of today's most influential political scientists, such as Barry Posen, Stephen Walt, or John Mearsheimer, all of whom contend that US grand strategic goals could be achieved at lower costs if Washington were to adopt a realist "offshore balancing" framework different from America's idealist "world-ordering" role since World War II, the leader of a previous generation of scholars, Samuel Huntington, rightly observed that America's success in military affairs is inevitably tied to the adoption of a strategic approach that matches the values and characteristics of US society as a whole: "The United States is a big, lumbering, pluralistic, affluent, liberal, democratic, individualistic, materialistic (if not hedonist), technologically supremely sophisticated society. Our military strategy should and, indeed, must be built upon these facts . . . Bigness not brains is our advantage, and we should exploit it."¹² Surely Huntington did not mean to insult the intelligence of American policymakers but merely to emphasize that more often than not the path to strategic success involves a generous commitment of resources, not risky cost-cutting schemes.¹³ As the only truly global superpower for at least the greater part of the twenty-first century, the United States must continue to occupy the prominent leadership role on the world stage in order to protect its national security, geopolitical, and economic interests.¹⁴

Strategy Design and Emergence in the Trump Era

The first months of the Donald Trump administration raised great concerns among US foreign policy experts on both sides of the partisan divide. Analysts criticized both the new administration's seemingly random decision-making *process* and also the *substance* of some of Trump's policy ideas. On the one hand, scholarly advocates of a Grand Strategy approach warn that Trump is following an improvisational and ad-hoc approach devoid of any coherence or consistency that will lead to disaster; to sum up this view, he would surely "regret not having a grand strategy."¹⁵ On the other hand, there are those who disagree that Trump's actions are devoid of a strategic framework or worldview and instead claim that the new president has put forward a nationalistic "America First" grand strategy that is consistent, but also fatally flawed and dangerous for the country and the world.¹⁶ Either way, both groups of scholars are highly pessimistic about the course of US foreign policy strategy in this administration.¹⁷

The results of the case studies examined in this book provide more cautious optimism regarding the likely outcomes of Trump's strategy-making style, but at the same time they reinforce some of the concerns regarding the substance of his early foreign policy positions. In a pattern that occurred throughout many of the presidencies discussed in this study, the Trump administration's legacy will likely be determined by how well his instincts for adaptability will lead him to learn while in office and change some of his problematic campaign-era positions. For President Trump to have a successful foreign policy presidency, he will essentially need to show an ability to discipline his improvisational style enough to allow for learning to occur and for an emergent strategy to develop, and also an ability to adapt and quickly abandon some of his misguided policy views if/when they lead to failures in the early stages of his presidency.

When it comes to the process of strategy formation, President Trump's decision-making style certainly resembles the Emergent Strategy model much more than the Grand Strategy model, and this unsurprisingly worries adherents of the latter model. A biographer chronicling Trump's CEO style remarked, "There was no formal business plan, no development strategy . . . Instead Donald would come up with ideas, do the preliminary calculations in his head, then tell someone to get moving on it."¹⁸ Such instincts and patterns of behavior worry US foreign policy analysts, and for good reason, but they are not necessarily insurmountable obstacles to the achievement of successful outcomes on the world stage. As this book has shown, an emergent strategy approach sometimes can lead to success even in the absence of a long-term grand strategic design. In order for the Trump administration to translate some of the president's impulses into a successful foreign policy based on emergent strategy, as opposed to chaos and incoherence, there are two major steps the administration should take.

A first necessary adaptation involves the formation of an Adaptation and Learning Directorate (ALD) inside the National Security Council (NSC). The keys to successful emergent strategy are continuous reassessment of one's performance, constant learning from one's mistakes, and rapid adaptation to unexpected changes in the external environment. Such an organization should conduct "red team" exercises for current policies and scenario planning for possible crisis similar to the exercises popularized by Shell and widely used in the oil industry and in the business world more broadly.¹⁹ ALD will focus on institutionalizing dynamic learning and adaptation, as opposed to formulating designs.

Second, there is the issue of personnel and the bureaucratic process: Trump must take into account the differences between how a CEO manages a business

firm and how a president conducts foreign and national security policy given the bureaucratic and legal constraints of the US system of government. Unlike a CEO, a president cannot hire and fire the majority of the people working for him, so he needs to control them in other ways. Apocryphal or not, President Truman's famous quote about the difficulties waiting for his successor ("Poor Ike. He'll say do this and do that and nothing at all will happen."²⁰) should serve as a warning for Trump that there are some major differences between how a CEO (or a military general) commands his staff and how a president manages the government bureaucracy. The most common way to ameliorate this problem is to appoint experienced Republican national security professionals both at the NSC and in the higher echelons of various government departments. Therefore, the Trump administration should reverse course and reach out to former GOP national security officials who are willing to serve in his administration, regardless of past tensions during the campaign.

Equally important, the case studies also suggest that this White House needs to rethink some of its more peculiar principles about how to best protect US national security and economic interests, and its misunderstanding of the value of America's unique role as a global superpower and defender of the free world more generally. During the campaign and in the early weeks of his administration, Trump and a few of his close advisers have been critical of Washington's role as global leader of a "liberal international order" and of America's commitments to a vast network of alliances in key regions of the world.²¹ Some foreign policy analysts perceive this rhetoric as representing a radical departure from the grand strategy of leading a liberal world order that guided US foreign policy from 1945 to the present.²² This critique exaggerates both the extent to which an overarching grand strategy of defending a so-called "liberal world order" shaped US foreign policy over the last seventy years (as exemplified by the many instances of emergent decisions and by the heated strategy debates highlighted in almost every case study presented in this book) and also probably overestimates how much Trump's campaign rhetoric and early plans will impact his actual foreign policy decisions during his tenure. Having said that, it is clear that while some of the new administration's actions (such as pushing for a much-needed increase in defense spending after the terrible impact of the "sequestration" imposed in 2011) mirror successful decisions of presidents like Truman and Reagan, other early activities of the Trump team (such as reducing the role of promoting US values and ideals in the world, downgrading the importance of NATO and other alliances, or cozying up to Russia) are likely to lead to negative consequences.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that Trump is not the first president to come to office with unrealistic or ill-advised views. Moreover, some of his more controversial pronouncements, while misguided, are not as uncommon as his critics contend: his “America First” platform of reducing spending on foreign policy commitments and shifting resources to domestic investments, or pursuing a narrowly defined, “national interest”-based foreign policy divorced from US values and ideals, mirror similar concerns expressed in different ways by presidential *candidates* as different as Eisenhower, Nixon, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama.

As this book showed, often it is *how well they learn and adapt in office* that determines the foreign policy successes and failures of American presidents, not the soundness of their initial plans and policies. President Trump needs to understand that the most successful presidents were those who proved most adaptable and nimble in pursuing their strategic goals in the face of unexpected events and challenges. Changing course on a failed policy represents a sign of competent and successful strategy-making, not an admission of weakness or failure. This is particularly the case on issues where an administration vowed during the campaign to make major changes to long-established pillars of American strategy, such as Washington’s network of alliances or the promotion of democracy and human rights. Just as Trump the CEO shifted his organization’s focus from owning large buildings to licensing his brand name without owning the physical construction when the market conditions shifted, Trump the president must show similar adaptability in governing.²³ Incidentally, this also implies that, more so than in other administrations, one of the major challenges for Trump’s advisors, including his influential inner circle, is to alert the president when such a “learning opportunity” has arrived and persuade him to shift course accordingly. If there is one overarching conclusion emerging from analyzing the experiences of American presidents from Truman to Bush, it is that they ought to concern themselves less with implementing the grand designs they brought to office and more with successfully responding to what British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan famously articulated as the top challenge of the statesman: “Events, dear boy, events.”²⁴

An Assessment of the Obama Doctrine

The research and writing of this book took place during the tumultuous debates surrounding the foreign policy of Barack Obama, but there is not enough evidence available either on the processes or the strategic outcomes of many of his key decisions to allow for a complete analysis of his presidency through the Grand Strategy vs. Emergent Strategy theoretical framework. Having said that, an early assessment of the Obama Doctrine is nevertheless confirming some of the insights and conclusions drawn from the other case studies examined in this book.

The Obama team came into office with a grand strategic framework characterized by several interconnected principles and objectives, and these ideas informed the administration's *National Security Strategy* documents and many of its most important subsequent actions.¹ First of all, the Obama administration's foreign policy was dominated by an overwhelming concern with avoiding another "Iraq," and most of Obama's key decisions on the use of force were shaped by his powerful reluctance to commit American troops abroad for any missions outside the very narrow pursuit of terrorist leaders. The president wanted to eschew the "world ordering" missions and the role of global security guarantor played by the United States in the post-Cold War era, a key component of America's strategy that in Obama's view led to an overly militarized foreign policy. As he put it, "There's a playbook in Washington that presidents are supposed to follow. It's a playbook that comes out of the foreign-policy establishment. And the playbook prescribes responses to different events, and these responses tend to be militarized responses. Where America is directly threatened, the playbook works. But the playbook can also be a trap that can lead to bad decisions."²

The same concern with a perceived overreliance by previous presidents on military force is also present in the administration's 2015 NSS: "Our military will remain ready to defend our enduring national interests while providing essential leverage for our diplomacy. The use of force is not, however, the only tool at our disposal, and it is not the principal means of U.S. engagement abroad, nor always

the most effective for the challenges we face. Rather, our first line of action is principled and clear-eyed diplomacy, combined with the central role of development in the forward defense and promotion of America's interests."³

Second, a strong desire to push other countries to "share more of the burden" of maintaining international peace and security with the United States represented another key goal of this administration; in Dan Drezner's language, this principle represented a grand strategic "multilateral retrenchment" from the role adopted by Washington in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 eras.⁴ Much to the dismay of many analysts in the US foreign policy community, Obama repeatedly complained in public about the lack of effort on the part of America's partners in tackling some of the key challenges of the twenty-first century. As he told Jeffrey Goldberg in a long interview, "Free riders aggravate me." Obama regarded "part of his mission as president . . . to spur other countries to take action for themselves, rather than wait for the US to lead."⁵ In another interview that was equally poorly received by the US foreign policy expert community, David Remnick reported a similar concern with the lack of more capable allies: "Obama told me that what he needs isn't any new grand strategy—I don't really even need George Kennan right now—but, rather, the right strategic partners."⁶ Lastly, this burden-sharing goal also underlined the awkward but fairly accurate "leading from behind" phrasing of the administration's approach to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in Libya.⁷

In addition to a shift from military force to diplomacy, and to an effort to share the burdens of maintaining the liberal world order with others, the third element of Obama's grand strategy was what the president often referred to as "taking the long view."⁸ For the Obama team, many of the major elements of the US foreign policy they inherited from the Bush administration, and more broadly the core tenets of America's post-World War II strategy, were in dire need of updating in order to address what Obama perceived as the most important long-term challenges of the twenty-first century. In defining the nature of long-term threats, Obama moved away from a "Global War on Terror" framework, and he similarly eschewed a return to power politics and geopolitical rivalries; instead, he argued that transnational issues such as climate change represent the new kind of long-term "existential threat" that the US government should focus on.⁹ In addition to climate change, another adaptation to the realities of the twenty-first century had to do with the geographical focus of US military investments for the long term: the administration embarked on a "pivot to Asia" and, implicitly, away from the Middle East and, to a lesser extent, Europe. As the Pentagon's 2012

Defense Strategic Guidance explains, “U.S. economic and security interests are inextricably linked to developments in the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia, creating a mix of evolving challenges and opportunities. Accordingly, while the U.S. military will continue to contribute to security globally, we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.”¹⁰

How successful was Obama’s grand strategy? While it is still too soon to offer a definitive judgment, the early returns indicate that in important respects Obama’s retrenchment strategy failed to achieve the kind of objectives envisioned by the president at the beginning of his tenure, at least in the short run. The administration’s principle of military noninterventionism in the Middle East shaped the decisions to withdraw all US troops from Iraq and to refuse to intervene militarily in Syria in a decisive way, two decisions that contributed to the biggest failure of the administration: not curtailing the rise of the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL) and the meltdown of Syria. From a group that was virtually defeated in 2008 thanks to the 2006–2007 Surge, ISIL not only became the most threatening global Islamist terrorist organization but also established a base of operations by controlling significant swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria. In addition to the direct threat from ISIL to American citizens and US allies, the group’s rise and the unabated ongoing Syrian civil war also led to a horrendous humanitarian tragedy in Syria, reaching almost half a million dead as of 2016, and to the refugee flows currently causing enormous political and social strains in Europe. The administration’s preference to “lead from behind” also showed its limits in the Libyan intervention, where having European allies “shoulder the burden” provided just enough military resources to remove Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi but ended up leaving behind an anarchic situation where various Islamist militias now flourish. Moreover, the intended shift of military resources from the Middle East to Asia also failed so far to improve America’s position in that region: China’s aggressive naval moves into the South China Sea and other nearby islands proceeded apace, undeterred by the Pentagon’s so-called “pivot to Asia.” Lastly, the administration’s “Russian reset,” another component of a diplomacy-first grand strategic framework, failed to prevent Moscow from embarking on an aggressive territorial conquest in Crimea and from further destabilizing Ukraine through its support for antigovernment rebels. In short, Washington’s retrenchment from the traditional role of ultimate military guarantor of the liberal world order (at least in the three core theaters of Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East) generally hurt rather than helped the US interest in advancing

a relatively stable and prosperous world order. The administration's longer-term strategic bets, such as the nuclear deal with Iran, the opening to Cuba, and the Paris Agreement on climate change, may yet vindicate the administration's grand strategy. At this point in time, it is too soon to speculate whether these initiatives will be regarded decades from now as successful farsighted decisions indicative of Obama's "long game," as the administration's defenders contend, or instead as misguided moves driven by Obama's flawed strategic thinking that ultimately failed to deliver much in the way of positive strategic results for the United States, as the president's contemporary critics argued at the time.

Leaving aside his grand strategy, how about the evidence indicating emergent learning during the Obama era? At times, the president's rhetoric appeared to indicate that he was favorably inclined to an incremental, Emergent Strategy-style decision making, such as in his comments that success in foreign policy is most often a matter of "hitting singles and doubles."¹¹ But did the president really adopt an emergent learning style in terms of his key decisions, or did he fall back on the initial grand strategic principles he brought to the office? Here, the evidence is mixed.

On the one hand, administration officials contend that two successful emergent shifts in the administration's foreign policy came in terms of Obama's approach to confronting ISIL and to his Russia policy. First, as the former National Security Council (NSC) senior director for defense policy Troy Thomas explains it, the administration "recognized that the program to train and equip Syrian rebels to fight ISIL was not working as originally planned and needed to be adapted by tailoring the training for smaller groups and by providing more direct support from the US military through the introduction of special operations forces into Syria to train and advise vetted opposition. The military also increased the pressure on ISIL through more air strikes involving an increasing number of coalition forces."¹²

Second, the question of US military posture in Europe represents another instance where "a change in the strategic environment" (i.e., Russia's aggressive military moves into Crimea and Ukraine) led to "a significant change in the administration's strategy," according to former NSC director for strategic planning Shawn Brimley.¹³ If initially the administration planned to withdraw two out of the four brigades stationed in Europe, after Crimea the Pentagon launched a well-funded program (the European Reassurance Initiative) to preposition equipment and maintain continuous troop rotations of US-based armored brigade combat

teams to the European theater in order to enhance NATO's regional deterrence in light of Moscow's renewed aggressiveness.¹⁴

On the other hand, however, in the crucial issue of launching a military intervention with the clear goal to decisively end Syria's civil war, the Obama team has not changed its initial view that a significantly larger US military commitment would be counterproductive. In practice, as Brookings Institution's Shadi Hamid showed, this meant that "The basic thrust of President Obama's approach to Syria was basically immovable. From 2011 onwards, the context on the ground changed dramatically, yet the administration's overarching objective remained more or less the same: minimize U.S. involvement as much as possible."¹⁵ Therefore, despite Obama's perception of himself as a "pragmatist" interested in what works, his actions in Syria in many ways were not shaped by emergent learning and adaption but rather represented "a product of a deeply held conviction that the use of American power in Syria would only make matters worse," Hamid concludes.¹⁶ Given how much the situation deteriorated throughout the years, in both geopolitical and humanitarian terms, it seems more and more likely that Obama's refusal to dramatically shift his strategy in this instance will go down as one of his worst decisions and as a major failure for his foreign policy legacy. It would indeed be almost ironic, if it were not tragic, that the biggest failure of this administration would not be caused by the lack of a grand strategy or by its incremental style, as its critics often stated at the time, but rather by Obama's adherence to his initial views on the use of force and his failure to learn and adapt while in office.

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Appendix: Grand Strategy Documents and List of Interviews

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- Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, US Army (ret.). Head of Combined Forces Command—Afghanistan (2003–2005). Phone interview, March 17, 2016.
- Shawn Brimley. National Security Council staff member, Director for Strategic Planning (2011–2012). Washington, DC, March 11, 2016.
- Richard Danzig. Secretary of the Navy (1998–2001). Washington, DC, November 27, 2010, and March 7, 2016.
- Amb. Eric Edelman. Assistant Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Soviet and East European Affairs (1990–1993), Principal Deputy Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs (2001–2003), Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (2005–2009). Durham, NC, May 16, 2013, and Washington, DC, May 8, 2016.
- Andrew Erdmann. State Department Policy Planning Staff member (2001–2003); National Security Council staff member, Director for Iran, Iraq, and Strategic Planning (2004–2005). Washington, DC, November 17, 2010.
- Peter Feaver. National Security Council staff member, Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control (1993–1994); Special Advisor for Strategic Planning and Institutional Reform (2005–2007). Durham, NC, May 23, 2013.
- Douglas Feith. Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (2001–2005). Washington, DC, June 4, 2013, and March 8, 2016.
- Stephen Hadley. Deputy National Security Advisor (2001–2005), National Security Advisor (2005–2009). Washington, DC, June 5, 2013.
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Notes

Chapter One: Grand Strategy, Emergent Strategy, and Foreign Policy Success

Epigraph: Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1979), 167.

1. I am thankful to historian Drew Erdmann for telling me this anecdote.
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5. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 23.
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9. Josef Joffe, “The Unreality of Obama’s Realpolitik,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 3, 2015.
10. Micah Zenko and Rebecca Friedman Lissner, “Trump Is Going to Regret Not Having a Grand Strategy,” *ForeignPolicy.com*, January 13, 2017.
11. The study of grand strategy in general, and American grand strategy in particular, is “very much in vogue” these days, to borrow an expression from the publisher’s description for Hal Brands’ *What Good Is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014). Other important recent books and articles include Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States’ Global Role in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Hal Brands, *Making the Unipolar Moment: US Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post–Cold War Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016); Paul Miller, *American Power and Liberal Order: A Conservative Internationalist Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016); Hal Brands and Peter D. Feaver, “Stress-Testing American Grand Strategy,” *Survival* 58, no.6 (December 2016–January 2017): 93–120; Hal Brands, Peter D. Feaver, John J. Mearsheimer, and Stephen Walt, “Should America Retrench?,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no.6 (November/December 2016): 159–164; John J.

Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no.4 (July/August 2016): 58–70; Christopher Hammer, *American Pendulum: Recurring Debates in US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014); William Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Stephen Sestanovich, *Maximalist: America in the World From Truman to Obama* (New York: Knopf, 2014); Bruce Jones, *Still Ours to Lead: America, Rising Powers, and the Tension Between Rivalry and Restraint* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2014); Paul Miller, “On Strategy, Grand and Mundane,” *Orbis* 60, no. 2 (Spring 2016): 237–47; Jordan Tama, “Does Strategic Planning Matter? The Outcome of US National Security Reviews,” *Political Science Quarterly* 130, no. 4 (2015): 735–65; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment,” *International Security* 37, no. 3 (Winter 2012–13): 7–51; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 1 (2013): 116–30; Barry Posen, “Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no.1 (2013):105–116; Peter Feaver, “American Grand Strategy at the Crossroads: Leading From the Front, Leading From Behind, or Not Leading at All,” and Robert J. Art, “Selective Engagement in the Era of Austerity,” in *America’s Path: Grand Strategy for the Next Administration*, ed. Richard Fontaine and Kristin M. Lord (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2012); Frank G. Hoffman, “Forward Partnership: A Sustainable American Strategy,” *Orbis* 57, no. 1 (2013): 20–40; Henry Nau, “The Jigsaw Puzzle and the Chessboard: The Making and Unmaking of Foreign Policy in the Age of Obama,” *Commentary* 153, no. 5 (2012): 13–26; Robert J. Lieber, *Power and Willpower in the American Future: Why the United States is Not Destined to Decline* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); John J. Mearsheimer, “Imperial by Design,” *The National Interest* 11, no.1 (2011): 16–34; Joseph M. Parent and Paul K. MacDonald, “The Wisdom of Retrenchment: America Must Cut Back to Move Forward,” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 6 (2011): 20–32; Daniel W. Drezner, “Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy?” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 4 (2011): 42–57.

12. This first chapter of the book is derived in part from an article published in the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, “Grand Strategy vs. Emergent Strategy in the Conduct of Foreign Policy” (February 10, 2017), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1288109>.

13. Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), xi. See also Steve Yetiv, *The Absence of Grand Strategy: The United States in the Persian Gulf, 1972–2005* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

14. Eliot Cohen, *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power and the Necessity of Military Force* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 203–206, 217.

15. Freedman, *Strategy*, 611; Drew Erdmann, “Foreign Policy Planning: Lessons from the Private Sector,” in *Avoiding Trivia*, ed. Daniel W. Drezner (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2009), 125–37.

16. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*, 339.

17. *Ibid.*, 353.

18. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 3. See also Miller, “On Strategy, Grand and Mundane,” for an overview of various recent definitions.

19. Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1. Similarly, Robert Art writes that “a grand strategy tells a nation’s leaders what goals they should aim for and how best they can use their country’s military power to attain these goals.” Robert Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 1.

20. Barry Posen, “A Grand Strategy of Restraint,” in *Finding Our Way: Debating American Grand Strategy*, ed. Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2008), 84. One of the earliest and most influential definitions belongs to Basil L. Liddell Hart, who defined this term in the period between the world wars within the context of great-power wars. In his view, grand strategy involves the coordination and direction of “all the resources of a nation or band of nations towards the achievement of the political objectives [of the war].” Writing in the early Cold War era, international relations theorist Robert Osgood echoed the same themes in his definition: “Strategy must now be understood as nothing less than the overall plan for utilizing the capacity for armed coercion—in conjunction with economic, diplomatic, and psychological instruments of power—to support foreign policy most effectively by overt, covert and tacit means.” Cited in John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot A. Cohen, and Colin Gray, *Strategy in the Contemporary World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3–4. See more definitions in Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy*, 415–23.

21. Posen, *Restraint*, 3.

22. Martel’s recent study perfectly summarized the literature on this issue: “With the end of the Cold War and the gradual collapse of the grand strategy of containment, the foreign policy establishment failed completely in its efforts to define a widely accepted and compelling successor grand strategy . . . The absence of guiding principles has led to policies that lurch from one priority to another, often based primarily upon urgent, short-term concerns rather than on a coherent, long-term strategy of what best serves the nation’s overall interest.” Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*, 1, 344. For a book-length treatment, see Hal Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad: America’s Search for Purpose in the Post–Cold War World* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2014).

23. Quoted in Thomas Friedman, “Rethinking Foreign Affairs,” *New York Times*, February 7, 1992.

24. John Lewis Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?,” lecture delivered at Duke University, February 26, 2009.

25. Andrew Krepinovich and Barry Watts, *Regaining Strategic Competence: Strategy for the Long Haul* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2009), 4. Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley also deplored the lack of a more organized effort to design a grand strategy for the post–9/11 world: “More than four years after September 11, 2001, there is no established interagency process for assessing the full spectrum of threats and opportunities endemic to the new security environment and identifying priorities for policy development, execution, and resource allocation . . . There is still no systematic effort at strategic planning for national security that is inclusive, deliberative, and integrative.” Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, “Strategic Planning for National Security,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 41 (2006): 80–81. Lastly, following a short stint inside the White House, Princeton’s Aaron Friedberg lamented the lack of rigorous analytical planning inside the US government: “The US government has lost its capacity to conduct

serious, sustained strategic planning.” Aaron L. Friedberg, “Strengthening US Strategic Planning,” *The Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2008): 47.

26. See, among others, Niall Ferguson, “Wanted: A Grand Strategy for America,” *Newsweek*, February 14, 2011; Peggy Noonan, “America’s Strategy Deficit,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 1, 2015; Anne Marie Slaughter, “Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy for the Second Term?,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 2013. For a contrary view, see Drezner, “Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy?”

27. “Mr. Gates says the real problem with US policy has been the absence of any clear strategy like the one that guided the US in the Cold War. ‘We all implicitly accepted [George] Kennan’s view that if we contained the Soviets long enough, their internal contradictions would finally lead to their collapse, even if nobody had any idea when. If you accept the premise that we face a generation-long period of turbulence and violence in the Middle East, the lack of an overarching strategy for how you react to a region in flames is a problem. Are there fires we should just let burn out? Who are our friends? Who should we support?’” Helman W. Jenkins, “The US Has No Global Strategy,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 29, 2016, A15.

28. Richard Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?” *International Security* 25, no. 2 (2000): 6.

29. Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders*, 10–11.

30. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*, 353.

31. Posen, *Restraint*; Art, *Grand Strategy for America*; Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*; Paul Miller, *Liberal Order: A Conservative Internationalist Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016).

32. For example, see James Dobbins, Richard H. Solomon, Michael Chase, Ryan Henry, F. Stephen Larrabee, Robert J. Lempert, Andrew Liepmann, Jeffrey Martini, David Ochmanek, and Howard Shatz, *Choices for America in a Turbulent World* (Washington, DC: RAND, 2015); Richard Fontaine and Kristin Lord, eds., *America’s Path: Grand Strategy for the Next Administration* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2012); Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry, *Democratic Internationalism: An American Grand Strategy for a Post-Exceptionalist Era* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2012).

33. In addition to the works of Martel and Brands referenced above, see also Colin Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

34. Terry Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24–32.

35. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*, 339.

36. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 199.

37. Frank Hoffman, “Grand Strategy: The Fundamental Considerations,” 480.

38. Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?”

39. *Ibid.*, 197.

40. Robert M. Grant, *Contemporary Strategy Analysis*, 5th ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 21.

41. Michael E. Porter, “What Is Strategy?,” *Harvard Business Review* 74, no.6 (1996): 64.

42. See Erdmann, “Lessons from the Private Sector.”

43. For example, Emily Goldman notes that both firms and states “exist within competitive environments; both seek to survive, to remain competitive, and to maximize relative power, whether understood as influence or market share . . . Both are organiza-

tions with relatively independent action in a system, defined group boundaries, control of their internal structure and resource allocation, varying levels of domain consensus, and a good deal of organizational complexity across various competencies.” For a more detailed explanation why the business world and the international security world share many similarities, see Emily Goldman, *Power in Uncertain Times* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 5–6.

44. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1977); Goldman, *Power in Uncertain Times*. See also the extended discussion of concepts from business strategy that also apply to international politics in Freedman, *Strategy*, 459–575.

45. It is important to emphasize that, regardless of the similarities and differences between firms and states, the goal of my manuscript is to test whether a model of strategy-making from the business world (i.e., emergent strategy), with some adaptation, actually explains the formation of successful strategies *better* than the model of Grand Strategy. Therefore, unlike Goldman, I do not argue that states *should* adopt a business world model because they face similar challenges to business firms but rather that states *have often done so* in the past to an extent unappreciated in the scholarly literature in security and strategic studies.

46. For an excellent presentation of the state-of-the-art theoretical literature in the subfield of foreign policy analysis, see Valerie Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

47. Philip Tetlock, “In Search of an Elusive Concept,” in George Brausler and Philip Tetlock, eds., *Learning in US and Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 26.

48. Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, and Joseph Lampel, *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour through the Wilds of Strategic Management* (New York: Free Press, 1998), 9. This section draws on the discussion of business strategic theory offered in this book.

49. *Ibid.*, 11.

50. As quoted in Erdmann, “Lessons from the Private Sector,” 149.

51. Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 189.

52. Grand Strategy advocates such as Martel and Brands do acknowledge the need for tactical flexibility to implementing one’s designed goals, but they nevertheless emphasize that such adjustments are at the level of tactics or policies, in contrast to the grand strategic level of overarching goals and principles. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*, 340; Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 199.

53. Henry Mintzberg, *Tracking Strategies: Towards a General Theory of Strategy Formation* (New York: Oxford University Press), 376.

54. Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 179.

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*, 180, 145.

57. Freedman, *Strategy*, 611.

58. For an excellent summary of the literature on bureaucratic politics and organizational process in the making of foreign policy, see Valerie Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 39–73. For the canonic study of this area, see Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson, 1999).

59. Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 195.

60. Boston Consulting Group, *Perspectives: Adaptive Advantage* (2010), 2. Accessed at www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/future_strategy_business_unit_strategy_adaptive_advantage.

61. Boston Consulting Group, *Adaptive Strategy in Government* (2012), 8. Accessed at www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/public_sector_future_strategy_adaptive_strategy_in_government.

62. Erdmann, “Lessons from the Private Sector,” 151.

63. Steve Weber and Bruce Jentleson, *End of Arrogance: America in the Global Competition of Ideas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 155–56.

64. A pair of analysts at the Center for New American Security, Richard Fontaine and Brian Burton, recently advised current strategic planners inside the US government to recognize the existence of emergent strategy in the course of foreign policy-making. Borrowing from the work of Erdmann, Fontaine and Burton highlight the importance of taking into account some of the core propositions of the Emergent Strategy paradigm. “Rather than adhering to strategies developed in a cyclical process by planners isolated from implementation, operators (from senior executives to field employees) make decisions with strategic implications during the course of everyday acts of initiative and reaction. These decisions add up to an emergent strategy, which often looks very different from that which a dedicated planner might develop, but nevertheless consists of actual actions taken rather than simply actions planned.” Richard Fontaine and Brian Burton, *Eye to the Future* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2010), 7.

65. Walter Kichel, *The Lords of Strategy: The Intellectual History of the New Corporate World* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2010), 321.

66. Weick’s views are discussed in Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 195.

67. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Goldman, *Power in Uncertain Times*.

68. For a succinct presentation of this theoretical literature, see Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 39–73. For some of the major works developing the concept of foreign policy learning as a cognitive psychological process, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976); Ernest R. May, “Lessons” of the Past: *The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Jack S. Levy, “Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield,” *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994); Richard E. Neustadt, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011).

69. Tetlock, “In Search of an Elusive Concept,” 26.

70. *Ibid.*, 27.

71. Murray, “Thoughts on Grand Strategy,” 8.

72. Inboden, “Statecraft, Decision-Making, and the Varieties of Historical Experience: A Taxonomy,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37, no.2 (2014): 307.

73. Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders*; Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006);

Henry Nau, *Conservative Internationalism: Armed Diplomacy Under Jefferson, Polk, Truman and Reagan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

74. For an elaborate treatment, see Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions*.

75. The literature on this topic is vast. An excellent recent theoretical argument backed by detailed case studies on the influence of domestic politics on US grand strategy can be found in Peter Trubowitz, *Strategy and Politics: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

76. See Layne, *Peace of Illusions*; Posen, *Restraint*; John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007). This is an argument characteristic of the neoclassical realist school of international relations, a tradition that underpins many of the leading works on US grand strategy.

77. For a recent examination of this topic, see Helen Milner and Dustin Tingley, *Sailing the Water's Edge: The Domestic Politics of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015). There are a few exceptions to this generally negative view of the role of domestic politics in grand strategy, such as Bruce Jentleson, "The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly* 36, no.1 (March 1992); Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Samuel Huntington, *Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

78. Richard Rumelt, *Good Strategy, Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why it Matters* (New York: Crown Business, 2011), 111.

79. See Richard Danzig, *Driving in the Dark: Ten Propositions about Prediction and National Security* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2011), 19.

80. The following summary is based on Richard Pascale, "Perspective on Strategy: The Real Story Behind Honda's Success," *California Management Review* 26 (Spring 1984): 47–72; Kiechel, *Lords of Strategy*, 149–57; and Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 201–206.

81. Pascale, "Perspective on Strategy."

82. Grant, *Contemporary Strategy Analysis*, 25.

83. Robert A. Burgelman and Andrew S. Grove, "Strategic Dissonance," *California Management Review* 38, no. 2 (1996): 8–25.

84. Erdmann ("Lessons from the Private Sector") offers the brief stories of GE, Johnson and Johnson, Google, and Shell as companies that moved away from the traditional strategic planning process in a more emergent direction. See also Robert Chia and Robin Holt, *Strategy without Design: The Silent Efficacy of Indirect Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Rumelt, *Good Strategy, Bad Strategy*.

85. Erdmann, "Lessons from the Private Sector," 140–41.

86. James Lacey, "The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire," in *Successful Strategies: Triumphant in War and Peace from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 44.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid., 55.

89. Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 7.

90. Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 408.

91. *Ibid.*, 418.

92. Murray, "Thoughts on Grand Strategy," 8.

93. Sinnreich, "Patterns of Grand Strategy," in *The Shaping of Grand Strategy*, 254. He also adds that "historical examples of marches toward clear goals are less than enlightening, one example being the disastrous trajectory of the Third Reich." *Ibid.*, 254. In a separate study of successful historical grand strategies, Sinnreich also notes: "it is striking to realize how few of our cases reveal explicit discussion of strategic alternatives." Sinnreich, "Afterword," in *Successful Strategies*, 435.

94. Marcus Jones, "Bismarckian Strategic Policy," in *Successful Strategies*, 239–40.

95. Marcus Jones, "Strategy as Character: Bismarck and the Prusso-German Question, 1862–1878," in *The Shaping of Grand Strategy*, 80. Jones goes on to conclude, extrapolating from Bismarck's example, that "In a world in which outcomes are indeterminate, competent strategy consists not in establishing long-range goals and systematically structuring policies and procedures to fulfill them but rather in a clear understanding of one's principles and priorities and a flexible, creative approach to realizing incremental gains in the short term. Local successes, diligently husbanded, led gradually to favorable overall outcomes," *Ibid.*, 108.

96. Wayne Hsieh, "The Strategy of Lincoln and Grant," and Richard Hart Sinnreich, "Victory by Trial and Error: Britain's Struggle against Napoleon," in Murray and Sinnreich, *Successful Strategies*, 189–214, 155–189.

97. Alexander George and George Bennett, *Case Study and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005). The qualitative case studies methodology is standard for studies of American grand strategy. See, for example, Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006) and Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

98. For an overview of this technique, see George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 205–33.

99. Deborah Welch Larson, "Research Note: Problems of Content Analysis in Foreign Policy Research: Notes from the Study of the Origins Cold War Belief Systems," *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (1988): 241–55.

100. David Edelstein and Ronald Krebs, "Delusions of Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 94, no.6 (November–December 2015).

101. For this distinction, see Joshua Rovner, "Warring Tribes Studying War and Peace," warontherocks.com, April 12, 2016. Accessed at <http://warontherocks.com/2016/04/warring-tribes-studying-war-and-peace/>.

102. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 308.

103. For such an example, see Liddel Hart's definition in note 17. See more on this debate on many definitions of grand strategy in Miller, "On Strategy, Grand and Mundane," and Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 3–6.

104. For a similar argument, see Bryan McGrath, "Unconstrained Grand Strategy," warontherocks.com, October 28, 2014. Accessed at <http://warontherocks.com/2014/10/unconstrained-grand-strategy>.

105. Posen, “Pull Back”; Brooks, Wohlforth, and Ikenberry, “Lean Forward”; Brands, Feaver, Mearsheimer, and Walt, “Should America Retrench?”

106. Jack S. Levy, “Counterfactuals and Case Studies,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Chapter Two: George Kennan, Containment, and the Beginning of the Cold War

1. Wilson Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

2. Despite a large literature on the origins of the Cold War, on the particular issue of how the Containment strategy was formed, there is a lack of theoretical debate in the scholarship. Instead of using competing theoretical models of strategy formation, as this book does, previous scholars chose to focus mostly on the underlying factors driving American policy-making, such as a search for security, ideology, or economic interests, and also on debating which side is more to blame for the outset of the Cold War. Some of the most commonly cited works of Cold War history that embrace in various ways the conventional wisdom crediting Kennan with the planning of Containment include: John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Thomas G. Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Walter LaFaber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945–1996* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997); Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Penguin, 1990).

3. Kennan was the first head of the newly created Office of Policy Planning inside the State Department, an office expressly set by Secretary Marshall to conduct longer-term strategic planning.

4. *New York Times* columnist Walter Lippmann led this campaign, with a dozen articles commenting on Kennan’s ideas throughout 1947, which culminated in a widely circulated book. Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1947).

5. Anne-Marie Slaughter and John Ikenberry, “Forging a World of Liberty under Law: US National Security in the 21st Century,” *The Princeton Project Papers* (2007), Introduction. Accessed at www.princeton.edu/~ppns/report/FinalReport.pdf.

6. In addition to primary documents, this discussion is based on the extensive study of Kennan’s strategic thinking in Thomas Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 25–37.

7. Telegram, George Kennan to George Marshall [“Long Telegram”], February 22, 1946. Harry S. Truman Administration File, Elsey Papers. Accessed at www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/6–6.pdf.

8. George F. Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* 25, no.4 (June 1947).

9. George F. Kennan, *Memoirs* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 351.

10. Quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 33.

11. One rather vague and open-ended sentence in the “X Article” led Kennan’s critics on the left, including Walter Lippmann, to blame him for offering a prescription for a universalist and militarist vision of containment: “It will be clearly seen that the Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence.” Kennan regretted that language and made numerous attempts at clarifying his opposition to both the globalism and the militarism some historians read into his language. For more on this controversy, see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chapter 2 and 3; “Kennan and Containment”; and “Implementing Containment.”

12. Quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 37, 40.

13. *Ibid.*, 359.

14. George Kennan, “PPS/13—Résumé on World Situation,” *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. 1 (1947), 770–77.

15. Kennan, *Memoirs*, 464. For a detailed analysis showing how many of the US government’s plans in the 1940s and into the early 1950s called repeatedly for a US military withdrawal from Europe, see James McCalister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943–1954* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002)

16. Kennan, “PPS/13.”

17. Timothy Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance: The Origins of The North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981), 108.

18. Kennan, “PPS/13.”

19. I borrow this three-stage classification from the extended and comprehensive examination of Kennan’s strategic design outlined in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 24–53.

20. Kennan, “Sources of Soviet Conduct.”

21. The text of Truman’s address to Congress where he announced the Truman Doctrine is available at <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945–1952/truman-doctrine>.

22. For more details on this approach and Truman’s shift to a combative stance toward the Soviet Union in 1946, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 282–315; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 21–23; Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 130–40; Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*; Yergin, *Shattered Peace*.

23. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), 196.

24. For an in-depth account of Truman’s approach and strategy during the Iranian crises, as well as during the Greece and Turkey crises that shortly followed it, see Bruce Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Greece, and Turkey* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980).

25. Kuniholm, *Cold War in the Near East*, 378; Gaddis, *Origins of the Cold War*, 312–13; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 110; Ronald E. Powaski, *The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917–1991* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 70.

26. Kuniholm’s study of this period concludes by highlighting how the response to

the Iranian crisis “conditioned the administration’s reaction to Soviet notes delivered to Turkey in the fall of 1946” and how “success of the firm stand taken by the administration towards the end of 1946 in Iran strongly reinforced an inclination to take a similar stand in Greece.” Kuniholm, *Cold War in the Near East*, 404.

27. Ibid.
28. Joseph Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks* (New York: The Viking Press, 1955), 11.
29. Ibid., 132–36.
30. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946–1952* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1956), 124–25.
31. Kuniholm, *Cold War in the Near East*, 369–73.
32. Eduard Mark, “The War Scare of 1946 and Its Consequences,” *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 3 (1997): 412.
33. Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*, 139–40.
34. Ibid., 140–41.
35. Harry S. Truman, “Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947,” The Avalon Project. Accessed at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp.
36. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 145.
37. Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*, 143. See also Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 220.
38. Gaddis, *Origins of Containment*, 22.
39. John Lewis Gaddis, “Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?,” *Foreign Affairs* 52, no. 2 (1974): 389.
40. In fact, Kennan himself concluded by 1949 that his own strategic plans had not been implemented as he intended. Shortly before leaving government, he wrote that “my concept of the manner in which our diplomatic effort should be conducted is not shared by any of the other senior officials of the [State] department.” In his memoirs, he famously contended that his ideas “made only a faint and wholly inadequate impression on official Washington.” Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 81. Dean Acheson apparently agreed. One of Acheson’s biographers quotes him as saying that Kennan’s “reputation has outrun his professional performance.” Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 118. Another contemporary, Joseph Jones, one of the drafters of Truman’s address to Congress announcing the Truman Doctrine, describes in what he calls a “curiously ironic note” that “Kennan, often regarded as the mastermind of the policy of containment . . . objected strongly to both the tone of the message and the specific action proposed.” Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*, 155.
41. As quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 27.
42. Ibid., 30. For an argument against the myth of a supposed US tradition of non-interventionism in the internal affairs of other countries, see Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America’s Foreign Policy from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Knopf, 2006).
43. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 106.
44. William Churchill, “Fulton Address,” as quoted in *Sources of World History*, ed. Mark A. Kishlansky (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 298–302.
45. Ibid.
46. William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy 1945–1960: The Soul of Containment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 105.

47. Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 91.

48. Kennan did approve of the economic aid, however. This was an early sign of his growing uneasiness with the military component of Containment. Wilson Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947–1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 32.

49. Accounts of the origins and formation of the Marshall Plan can be found in John Gimbel, *Origins of the Marshall Plan* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976); Robert A. Pollard, *Economic Security and the Origins of the Cold War, 1945–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); and Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*.

50. David W. Ellwood, “Marshall Plan: A Strategy That Worked,” *Historians on America*, April 3, 2008. Accessed at <http://marshallfoundation.org/library/documents/marshall-plan-strategy-worked/english/2008/April/20080423213601eaifaso.2363535.html>.

51. Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 6.

52. William C. Cromwell, “Marshall Plan, Britain, and the Cold War,” *Review of International Studies* 8, no. 4 (1982): 235.

53. Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 9.

54. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 159.

55. Jones, *Fifteen Weeks*, 249.

56. Ellwood, “Marshall Plan,” 2.

57. For more details, see Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 10; Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*, 46. See also the discussion on Kennan’s role in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chapter 2.

58. George Kennan, “PPS/1—Policy With Respect to American Aid to Western Europe,” *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. 3 (1947), 223–30.

59. Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 10.

60. Gaddis, *Kennan*, 271.

61. Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 15.

62. For a summary of these differences, see Gimbel, *Origins of Marshall Plan*, 14.

63. Gaddis, *Kennan*, 271.

64. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*, 65.

65. *Ibid.*, 71–73.

66. Campbell Craig and Frederick Logevall, *America’s Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2009), 91.

67. Richard Best, *Cooperation with Like-Minded Peoples: British Influences on American Security Policy, 1945–1949* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 115.

68. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*, 116.

69. For the origins of NATO, see Lawrence Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance* (New York: Roman & Littlefield, 2007); Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*; Dan Cook, *Forging the Alliance: NATO, 1945–1950* (New York: Arbor House, 1989).

70. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*, 80.

71. Quoted in Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*, 117.

72. The Treaty of Brussels was a military cooperation agreement that Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium signed earlier that year.

73. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 139–40; Kennan, 333–34.

74. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*, 108.

75. Miscamble, *George F Kennan*, 129, 137.

76. Gier Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945–1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (1986): 263–77.

77. Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 35.

78. Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

79. Some of the most important works questioning the narrative of Kennan as the main author of Containment include Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*; Thomas Wright, "Learning the Right Lessons from the 1940s," in *Avoiding Trivia*, ed. Daniel W. Drezner (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009); Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 66–90.

80. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan*, 348. Similarly, Melvyn Leffler's case study of this era in the *Cambridge History of the Cold War* refers explicitly to "the gradual emergence of a Containment grand strategy." Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 67. Leffler's book on the topic also argued that the practice of containment, if not the strategy, existed before Kennan's "Long Telegram." Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 66–90.

81. Gaddis, who in his earlier book *Strategies of Containment* credited Kennan with being the chief architect of US Cold War grand strategy, once again reinforced this image in the newly released official biography of Kennan, which notes that the "Long Telegram" opened up "a path between the appeasement that had failed to prevent World War II and the alternative of a third world war." In his review of Gaddis's new biography, Marc Trachtenberg criticizes this argument by contending that Kennan should not be given credit for showing a "middle path" because the crucial decision-makers of the time never really considered appeasement and war as the only alternatives. Gaddis, *Kennan*, 694. In a review of this book, Miscamble argues that: "Gaddis rightly attends to Kennan's important role in calling forth the need for a new American approach to the Soviet Union in the Long Telegram and elsewhere, but he overstates Kennan role in fashioning that response. He succumbs, at least partly, to the temptation to anoint George Kennan as the essential delineator of the West's policy of containing the Soviet Union." Gaddis appears to back away from his stronger claims that Kennan was the architect of containment, and he concedes that Miscamble's arguments are fairly persuasive: "I defer to Miscamble's judgment when he says that Kennan was no Moses: he was not the sole architect of containment, and if my book conveyed that impression, it fell prey to the biographer's occupational hazard of inflating the subject's importance." Thomas Maddux, "Roundtable Review of John Lewis Gaddis. George F. Kennan: An American Life," *H-Diplo Roundtable Review* 13, no. 24 (2012): 47–49.

82. Maddux, *H-Diplo Roundtable on Kennan*, 48.

83. Quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 123.

84. *Ibid.*

85. Thomas Wright echoes this view as well in his cautionary remarks about the mythology that developed around Kennan's strategic planning foresight: "What succeeded in the 1940s came out of the best of traditional diplomacy—adjustment to changing interna-

tional circumstances and vigorous bilateral diplomacy—and not out of advance planning.” Wright also goes on to offer a view of Kennan’s limited role similar to my interpretation offered in this chapter. “Kennan, head of policy planning from 1947 to 1949, was relatively uninvolved in the crafting of the Marshall Plan, and he opposed both the Truman Doctrine and NATO . . . It is absolutely vital to remember that these initiatives were not the product of deliberate thought and planning.” Wright, “Learning the Right Lessons,” 128.

Chapter Three: Globalizing Containment

1. “Truman to Acheson, January 31, 1950,” *Foreign Relations of the United States* (1950), as quoted in Ernest R. May, *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68* (New York: Bedford Books, 1993), 4.

2. Steven L. Rearden, *The Evolution of American Strategic Doctrine: Paul H. Nitze and the Soviet Challenge* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 7. See also Ronald E. Powaski, *The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917–1991* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 85.

3. May, *American Cold War Strategy*, 16.

4. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 83. Thomas Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 383.

5. William W. Stueck, Jr., *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 215–16.

6. All references and quotations in this section are from the original text: “NSC-68: Objectives and Programs for National Security (April 1950).” Accessed at www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf.

7. Warner S. Schilling, Paul A. Hammond, and Glenn S. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 370.

8. As quoted in Robert Jervis, “The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24, no. 4 (1980): 585.

9. As James Irving Matray concludes in his history of the Korean War, “American leaders never doubted for a moment that Stalin had ordered the invasion in a determined effort to extend the area of Soviet control. Truman and his advisors defined the North Korean attack for the American people as part of the design of ‘world communism’ for global conquest, although Korea’s postwar history indicated that a civil war was in fact probable.” James Irving Matray, *The Reluctant Crusade: American Foreign Policy in Korea, 1941–1950* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1985), 258.

10. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1956), 333.

11. Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 367.

12. “President’s Conversation with George M. Elsey, 26 June 1950,” as quoted in Barton J. Bernstein, “The Truman Administration and the Korean War,” in *The Truman Presidency*, ed. Michael J. Lacey (New York: Cambridge University Press), 422.

13. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American Na-*

tional Security Policy During the Cold War (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 107. Other historians make the same point. Hal Brands writes: “it seemed unthinkable that Truman would allow the country to be overrun.” Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 47.

14. Gaddis’s account of this crisis agrees with my interpretation; he concludes that “American strategy in Korea was consistent with the spirit of NSC-68.” Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 108–109.

15. Allison quoted in Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 94.

16. Acheson quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 109.

17. Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 94.

18. See the discussion in Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 366–67.

19. Department of Defense (Comptroller), *National Defense Budget Estimates for Fiscal Year 2015 (Green Book)*, April 2014, 143.

20. Hal Brands, *The Promise and Pitfalls of Grand Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), 27. For more on the military buildup, see also Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 372–74; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 110–11.

21. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 112.

22. Jervis, “Korean War,” 580.

23. Schilling, Hammond, and Snyder, *Strategy, Politics and Defense Budgets*, 370.

24. Etzold and Gaddis, *Containment*, 34.

25. See May, *Cold War Strategy*, 131.

26. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1950*, vol. 1, 293.

27. May, *Cold War Strategy*, 98.

28. Jervis, “Korean War,” 578–84.

29. Quoted in Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 391.

30. *Ibid.*, 392.

31. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 113.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 44.

34. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 382.

35. According to Yuen Foong Khong’s tabulations, Korea was referenced no fewer than 51 times by US officials between 1964 and 1966, more frequently than any other analogy or lesson of the past. Khong also quotes Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs William Bundy stating that the US policy in South Vietnam “was not the result of some abstract design from a drawing board, but rather the fruit of history and experience” as well as Secretary of State Dean Rusk as being “enormously impressed by the analogy of Korea because he had been deeply engaged in the Korean War,” according to his deputy. Yuen Foong Khong, “The Lessons of Korea and the Vietnam Decision of 1965,” in *Learning in US and Soviet Foreign Policy*, ed. George Brausler and Philip Tetlock (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 302–50.

Chapter Four: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Project Solarium, and the New Look

1. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 132.

2. Dulles described international Communism as “a vast monolithic system,” and he warned that “the object of Soviet communism is to extend its system throughout the world and establish its ‘one world’ of state socialism.” Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 135.

3. Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Remarks at the National Defense Executive Reserve Conference,” November 14, 1957. Available at www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=10951.

4. Steven Metz, “Eisenhower and the Planning of American Grand Strategy,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 14, no. 1 (1991): 53; Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 79.

5. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 79.

6. The name refers to the White House “solarium” where the initial meeting authorizing the exercise was held.

7. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 124.

8. Raymond Millen, “Eisenhower and US Grand Strategy,” *Parameters* 44, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 35. Thomas Mahnken and Paul Lettow similarly conclude that “The Eisenhower Administration is now generally seen as the gold standard in national security strategic planning.” Paul Lettow and Tom Mahnken, “Toolbox: Getting Serious about Strategic Planning,” *The American Interest* 5, no. 1 (2009): 73. See also Paul Miller, “Organizing the National Security Council: I Like Ike’s,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (September 2013).

9. Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, “Strategic Planning for National Security,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 41 (2006): 80–81.

10. Andrew Krepinovich and Barry Watts, *Regaining Strategic Competence: Strategy for the Long Haul* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2009), 7.

11. David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 71.

12. “Cutler Memorandum for the Record, May 9, 1953,” *Summaries Prepared by the NSC Staff of Project Solarium Presentations and Written Reports*, cited in Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 125.

13. *Ibid.*, 126

14. *Ibid.*, 125–26.

15. *Ibid.*, 138.

16. The White House, “NSC-162/2: Basic National Security Policy,” October 1953, 5–6. Available at www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-162-2.pdf.

17. *Ibid.*, 19.

18. *Ibid.*, 22.

19. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 194.

20. As quoted in Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton University Press, 1959), 248.

21. John Foster Dulles, “Strategy for Security and Peace,” *Foreign Affairs* 32 (April 1954).

22. NSC-162/2, 25.

23. James Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War: US Policy, Intelligence and CIA Operations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 89–90, 93.

24. John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II Through the Persian Gulf War* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 121.
25. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 145.
26. *Ibid.*, 159.
27. *Ibid.*, 166.
28. As a recent study of Eisenhower's position on the use of nuclear weapons in Korea concluded, "Even more so than during the earlier debates within the NSC about expanding the war with nuclear weapons, the president continued to press the case for the use of tactical nuclear weapons against the North Koreans and Chinese if they launched a major attack against South Korea." Michael Gordon Jackson, "Beyond Brinkmanship: Eisenhower, Nuclear War Fighting, and Korea, 1953–1968," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (March 2005): 56.
29. Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and The Soviet Union, 1948–1972* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 125–26.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, 128.
32. Jean Edward Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace* (New York: Random House), 661. Some Eisenhower biographers, such as Stephen Ambrose and Evan Thomas, claimed that Eisenhower's success was not due to Massive Retaliation but rather to his use of ambiguity and deception. This line of argument contends that Ike masterfully bluffed his way through the crisis by convincing the Chinese to back down even as he might not actually have intended to use nuclear weapons. However, this interpretation is not supported by other historical studies of this episode, which persuasively showed that Eisenhower was indeed serious about using tactical nuclear weapons in this crisis. See Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, vol. 2 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 245. Evan Thomas, *Ike's Bluff: President Eisenhower's Secret Battle to Save the World* (New York: Little, Brown, 2012). For evidence that Eisenhower was ready to fight a nuclear war in this crisis, see H. W. Brands, Jr., "The Age of Vulnerability: Eisenhower and the National Insecurity State," *The American Historical Review* 94, no. 4 (October 1989): 982–84; Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, 139–41.
33. Some critics of the administration, like Chang, claimed that Eisenhower's use of nuclear threats during the crisis emboldened the Chinese to launch their own nuclear program, but it seems unlikely that they would not have done so anyways in future years. See Gordon Chang, "To the Nuclear Brink: Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis," *International Security* 12, no. 4 (Spring 1988), 96–122.
34. Not all historians agree that the crisis was a success of the new doctrine of Massive Retaliation: for a critique, see H. W. Brands, Jr., "Testing Massive Retaliation: Credibility and Crisis Management in the Taiwan Strait," *International Security* 12, no. 4 (Spring 1988), 124–51.
35. Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, 183–97.
36. H. W. Brands, Jr., "Eisenhower and the Problem of Loose Ends," in *Eisenhower: A Centenary Assessment*, ed. Gunter Bischof and Stephen Ambrose (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1995), 132.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Metz, "Eisenhower," 62, 64.

39. As Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman note in their comprehensive study of the New Look, “[Eisenhower] refused to modify his basic strategy or the force composition significantly despite the new conditions.” Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 251. The same conclusion that Eisenhower did not change his basic views on the New Look despite the changes in the external conditions is reached by Gaddis. See Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 173.

40. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 176.

41. Brands, “Eisenhower and Loose Ends,” 133.

42. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 162.

43. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 196.

44. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 169.

45. Metz, “Eisenhower,” 56.

46. Along the same lines as this analysis, H. W. Brands remarked that Eisenhower’s famous warning against the rise of a “military-industrial complex” could be interpreted as “an admission of defeat by a frustrated chief executive” who could not institutionalize his budgetary priorities in the national security bureaucracy in a sustainable way. Brands, “Age of Vulnerability,” 988.

47. Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 256.

48. Department of Defense (Comptroller), *National Defense Budget Estimates for Fiscal Year 2015 (Green Book)*, April 2014, 97.

49. *Ibid.*, 92–93.

50. *Ibid.*, 97.

51. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, “Summary of Receipts, Outlays, and Surpluses or Deficits (–) as Percentages Of GDP: 1930–2020.” Available at www.bea.gov/national.

52. For more on this fear of an overmilitarization of the US society during the Cold War, see Aaron L. Friedberg, *In The Shadow of the Garrison State: America’s Anti-Statism and its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

53. Stephen Rabe, “Eisenhower Revisionism: A Decade of Scholarship,” *Diplomatic History* 17 no. 1 (1993), 113. Metz, “Eisenhower,” 57. For an extensive treatment of Eisenhower’s covert operations, see Stephen E. Ambrose and Richard H. Immerman, *Ike’s Spies: Eisenhower and the Espionage Establishment* (Oxford, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1981).

54. Gregory Treverton, *Covert Action: The Limits of Intervention in the Postwar World* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 46. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 135.

55. For an overview of this operation, see the account in James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

56. Dulles declared that the arms shipment could lead to a situation in which “a government in which Communist influence is very strong has come into a position to dominate militarily the Central American area.” Treverton, *Covert Action*, 70. For a comprehensive historical treatment of the Guatemala operation, see Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982).

57. Callanan, *Covert Action*, 134–35.

58. Ibid., 164.

59. Treverton, *Covert Action*, 82.

60. US State Department, “Eisenhower Doctrine,” in *Milestones*, 1953–1960. Available at <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/eisenhower-doctrine>.

61. For example, see Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War: Eisenhower and Dien Bien Phu*, 1954 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Robert Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

62. David Anderson, *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953–1961* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 38. See also Richard Immerman, “The United States and the Geneva Conference: A New Look,” *Diplomatic History* 90, no. 1 (January 1990): 46.

63. In public speeches as well as in private deliberations, Eisenhower argued that a collapse of Vietnam “would produce a chain reaction which would result in the fall of all of Southeast Asia to the Communists.” Anderson, *Trapped by Success*, 28, 68.

64. Ibid., 38.

65. Rabe, “Eisenhower Revisionism,” 111.

66. Metz, “Eisenhower,” 65.

Chapter Five: Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and Détente

1. Quoted in Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 66.

2. Robert S. Litwak, *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969–1976* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 65.

3. Peter Rodman, *Presidential Command: Power, Leadership, and the Making of Foreign Policy from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush* (New York: Random House, 2009), 45–46.

4. For Kissinger’s early frustrations with the bureaucracy, see Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1979), 41–45. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 299–301; and Litwak, *Détente*, 64–73.

5. Jeremi Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 224.

6. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 59–60. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 274–76.

7. Richard Nixon, “Report by President Nixon to the Congress: US Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace,” in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976*, vol. 1, *Foundations of Foreign Policy, 1969–1972*, document 60.

8. Henry Kissinger, *Necessity for Choice* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1979), 357.

9. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 158.

10. James Goldgeier and Jeremi Suri, “Revitalizing the US National Security Strategy,” *The Washington Quarterly* 38, no.4 (Winter 2016): 43.

11. Nixon, *A New Strategy for Peace*, 2.

12. Henry Kissinger, “Central Issues of American Foreign Policy,” in Kermit Gordon, ed., *Agenda for the Nation* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1968), 588–89, 602.

13. Ibid., 611.

14. For more on Kissinger's "realist" worldview and his effort to move US foreign policy in that direction, see Suri, *Kissinger*, 235–38; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 272–81; Litwak, *Détente*, 66–79.

15. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 281. In his authoritative account of the various ideas shaping Containment during the Cold War, Gaddis noticed "striking similarities" between the worldviews of these two grand strategists:

"Both adhered to a multidimensional conception of power in the world. Both insisted that means were limited, and that distinctions had to be made, accordingly, between vital and peripheral interests. Both saw the Soviet Union, not international communism, as the major threat to those interests. Both sought to contain the threat and respond asymmetrically: by relying on diversity to maintain the balance of power, by exploiting fissures within the international communist movement, [and] by combining pressures and inducements to try to bring about long-term changes in the Soviet concept of international relations . . . Like Kissinger, Kennan had identified American interests with maintaining a balance of power in a multipolar world. And like Kissinger, Kennan had evolved a conception of interests capable of standing on its own, independent, as intervening strategies had not been, of both threats and commitments."

16. Nixon, *A New Strategy for Peace*, 2.

17. The three tenets of the original doctrine initially announced by the president at a press conference in Guam were as follows: "First, the United States will keep all of its treaty commitments. Second, we shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security. Third, in cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense." Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam," November 3, 1969. Available at www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2303.

18. Nixon, *A New Strategy for Peace*, 3.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, 5, 7.

21. *Ibid.*, 6.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 128–29.

24. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 331.

25. Nixon, *A New Strategy for Peace*, 6.

26. As quoted in Litwak, *Détente*, 115.

27. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 322.

28. *Ibid.*, 320–22.

29. As quoted in Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 69.

30. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 315.

31. Niall Ferguson, "The Meaning of Kissinger: A Realist Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs* 18 (September/October 2015).

32. See Ferguson, "Meaning of Kissinger"; Suri, *Kissinger*, 197–249 ; Brands, *What*

Good Is Grand Strategy?, 100; “Henry Kissinger: Good or Evil,” *Politico Magazine*, October 10, 2015. www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/10/henry-kissinger-history-legacy-213237.

33. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 87.

34. *Ibid.*, 86.

35. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 319, 324.

36. *Ibid.*, 313.

37. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy*, 60; See also Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 325–26.

38. Gaddis expressed a common scholarly judgment when he offered high praise to Nixon and Kissinger for this diplomatic accomplishment: “It is difficult to think of anything the Nixon administration could have done that would have produced a more dramatic shift in world power relationships of greater benefit to the United States at less cost.” Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 295.

39. Quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 293.

40. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 165.

41. “Getting To Beijing: Henry Kissinger’s Secret 1971 Trip.” Available at <http://china.usc.edu/getting-beijing-henry-kissingers-secret-1971-trip>.

42. “Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People’s Republic of China,” February 27, 1972. Available at <http://china.usc.edu/joint-communiqu%C3%A9-united-states-america-and-peoples-republic-china-february-27-1972>.

43. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 167.

44. *Ibid.*, 191.

45. Suri, *Kissinger*, 239.

46. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 91.

47. *Ibid.*, 90.

48. Suri, *Kissinger*, 240–41.

49. Quoted in Suri, *Kissinger*, 238.

50. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 335–41.

51. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 94–98. See also Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 334–41. For example, Brands writes that a major problem was that “Kissinger’s approach to grand strategy was premised on the idea that gifted statesmen could peer through the haze of crisis and impose their own meaning on history” (95); another source of the administration’s failure, according to Brands, came from regarding grand strategy as “something that had to be executed independently of, and even in opposition to, the institutions and traditions of the society it was meant to serve” (98).

Chapter Six: Ronald Reagan and the End of the Cold War

1. In addition to these two schools of thought, there is a third group of scholars who do not give the Reagan administration much credit at all for the successful conclusion of the Cold War. In this chapter, I use some of the arguments raised by those scholars in judging the strategic consequences of the administration’s actions, but for the theoretical framework of this book it is most appropriate to focus on the arguments of the scholars in the Grand Strategy and Emergent Strategy categories. For example, of works largely skeptical

of Reagan's strategic contribution to the successful end of the Cold War, see John Prados, *How the Cold War Ended: Debating and Doing History* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2011); Vlad Zubok, *Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Did Peace Through Strength End the Cold War? Lessons from the INF," *International Security* 16, no. 1 (Summer 1991): 162–88.

2. Thomas Mahnken, "The Reagan Administration's Strategy toward the Soviet Union," in *Successful Strategies: Triumphing in War and Peace from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 403.

3. Paul Lettow, *Ronald Reagan and His Quest to Abolish Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Random House, 2006), 56.

4. Francis Marlo, *Planning Reagan's War: Conservative Strategists and America's Cold War Victory* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2012), 10.

5. William Inboden, "Grand Strategy and Petty Squabbles: The Paradox and Lessons of the Reagan NSC," in *The Power of the Past: History and Statecraft*, ed. Hal Brands and Jeremi Suri (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2016), 156.

6. Beth Fischer, *The Reagan Reversal: Foreign Policy and the End of the Cold War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997).

7. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 350.

8. Jeremi Suri, "Explaining the End of the Cold War: A New Historical Consensus?," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4, no. 4 (2002): 71.

9. James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 3, 198. See also James Graham Wilson, "How Grand Was Reagan's Strategy, 1976–1984?," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 18, no. 4 (2007): 773–803.

10. Ronald Reagan, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union," February 6, 1985. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=38069.

11. Inboden, "Grand Strategy and Petty Squabbles," 157.

12. Lettow, *Ronald Reagan*, 63.

13. White House, "NSDD 32: US National Security Strategy," May 1982, 1. Declassified text available from Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-032.htm.

14. *Ibid.*, 2.

15. White House, "NSSD 1-82: US National Security Strategy," April 1982, 8. Declassified text from the Reagan Library available at http://insidethecoldwar.org/sites/default/files/documents/U.S%20National%20Security%20Strategy%2C%20April%2C%201982_o.pdf.

16. *Ibid.*, 14.

17. NSDD 32, 6.

18. *Ibid.*, 5.

19. NSSD 1-82, 83.

20. NSDD 32, 2.
21. NSDD 1-82, 23, 25.
22. *Ibid.*, 25–26.
23. Ronald Reagan, “Promoting Democracy and Peace: The Westminster Address,” June 8, 1982, United States Department of State—Bureau of Public Affairs. Available at www.ned.org/ronald-reagan/promoting-democracy-and-peace.
24. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 351.
25. Ronald Reagan, “We Will Be a City Upon a Hill,” January 25, 1974, First Conservative Political Action Conference. Available at http://reagan2020.us/speeches/City_Upon_A_Hill.asp.
26. Ronald Reagan, “Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida,” March 8, 1983. Available at <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/speech-3409>.
27. Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 406.
28. Richard Pipes, *Vixi: Memoirs of a Non-Belonger* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 197.
29. *Ibid.*, 198.
30. White House, “NSDD 75: U.S. Relations with the USSR,” March 8, 1983. Declassified text available from Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-075.htm.
31. Pipes, *Vixi*, 201.
32. Lettow, *Ronald Reagan*, 79.
33. NSDD 75, 2.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, 3.
36. *Ibid.*, 4.
37. For a book-length study of the Reagan Doctrine, see Mark Lagon, *The Reagan Doctrine: Sources of American Conduct in the Cold War’s Last Chapter* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).
38. Department of Defense (Comptroller), *National Defense Budget Estimates for Fiscal Year 2015 (Green Book)*, April 2014, 92–93.
39. Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 423.
40. Ronald E. Powaski, *The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917–1991* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 233.
41. Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 423. See also Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 112.
42. Marlo, *Planning Reagan’s War*, 143.
43. *Ibid.*, 144.
44. Ronald Reagan, “Announcement of Strategic Defense Initiative,” March 23, 1983. Available at www.mda.mil/global/documents/pdf/announcesdi.pdf.
45. Lettow, *Ronald Reagan*, 218–21.
46. Marlo, *Planning Reagan’s War*, 29; Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 427.
47. Peter Schweizer, *Victory: The Reagan Administration’s Secret Strategy That Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1994).
48. Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 430.

49. Inboden, “Grand Strategy and Petty Squabbles,” 172.
50. Quoted in Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 127.
51. Suri, “Explaining the End,” 65.
52. *Ibid.*, 66.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 120. Mahnken, “The Reagan Strategy,” 428.
55. Wilson, *Triumph of Improvisation*, 199, 88.
56. *Ibid.*, 124.
57. Zubok, *Failed Empire*, 273.
58. *Ibid.*, 306.
59. *Ibid.*, 343.
60. The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation estimates that Communist regimes are responsible for over 100 million deaths. <http://victimsofcommunism.org/mission/legacy-of-communism>.
61. Ronald Reagan, “Address at Commencement Exercises at the University of Notre Dame,” May 17, 1981. Available at <https://reaganlibrary.archives.gov/archives/speeches/1981/51781a.htm>.
62. Reagan, “Promoting Democracy and Peace.”
63. Marlo, *Planning Reagan’s War*, 32.
64. For more on Reagan’s direct involvement and the bureaucratic fights that led to the creation of the NED, see Inboden, “Grand Strategy and Petty Squabbles,” 166–68.
65. As quoted in Tony Smith, *America’s Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 270–71.
66. Marlo, *Planning Reagan’s War*, 33.
67. *Ibid.*, 34. For more, see Benjamin Fischer, “The CIA, Solidarity, and Western Technology,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 25, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 428–69.
68. For the story of adding that famous line to the speech, see James Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan: A History of the End of the Cold War* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 117–82.
69. As quoted in Peter M. Robinson, “Four Words That Moved the World: ‘Tear Down This Wall,’” *Wall Street Journal*, June 9, 2012, A15.
70. As quoted in Lorne W. Craner, “Human Rights and Democracy Assistance: Increasing the Effectiveness of US Foreign Aid,” Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, June 10, 2010. Available at www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2010%20June%2010%20IRI%20President%20Testifies%20on%20Increasing%20the%20Effectiveness%20of%20Human%20Rights%20and%20Democracy%20Assistance%20—%20complete%20testimony.pdf. For more, see Lech Walesa, *The Struggle and the Triumph: An Autobiography* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1994).
71. As Carnes Lord shows, “Surveys taken in 1980 indicated that two-thirds of the adult population of Poland tuned into RFE during moments of tension; eleven million Poles (42 percent of the population) listened on an average day in 1981, and seventeen million at least once a week. In spite of jamming estimated to be 80 percent effective after 1981, these numbers changed little in the years following. That RFE came to be the communications medium of choice for the Polish people was more than a function of its

provision of accurate and comprehensive news, important as that was. It also reflected what may fairly be called RFE's operational role in the Polish resistance." Carnes Lord, "The Past and Future of Public Diplomacy," *Orbis* 42, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 62.

72. Reagan, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress."

73. For detailed accounts of these actions, see James Scott, *Deciding to Intervene: The Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Lagon, *The Reagan Doctrine*.

74. Bruce W. Jentleson, "Discrepant Responses to Falling Dictators: Presidential Belief Systems and the Mediating Effects of the Senior Advisory Process," *Political Psychology* 11, no. 2 (1990): 353–84.

75. For a longer discussion of these negative consequences, see Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 140–42.

76. See the exploration of this argument in Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

77. For examples, see Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 141.

78. Suri, "Explaining the End," 92.

79. Mann, *Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, xii.

80. Ronald Reagan, *An American Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 707–708.

81. As quoted in Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 131.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Mahnken, "The Reagan Strategy," 21. This view is also present in Inboden, "Grand Strategy and Petty Squabbles."

84. Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 116. For the same argument, see Henry Nau, *Conservative Internationalism: Armed Diplomacy Under Jefferson, Polk, Truman and Reagan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

85. *Ibid.*, 139.

86. Fischer, *Reagan Reversal*, 3–4.

87. Mann, *Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, 250–51.

88. Wilson, *Triumph of Improvisation*, 86.

89. *Ibid.*, 199.

90. Suri, "Explaining the End."

91. Richard Allen, "The Man Who Won the Cold War," *Hoover Digest*, January 30, 2000. Available at www.hoover.org/research/man-who-won-cold-war.

92. John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 217.

93. Wilson, *Triumph of Improvisation*, 199.

Chapter Seven: George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and the Post–Cold War Era

1. The end of the Cold War is difficult to periodize precisely, given the lack of a formal peace agreement, as would be the case in a traditional military conflict, and the gradual dissolution of the Eastern bloc during 1989–1991. For the purpose of this book, I considered it most useful to begin my analysis of the post–Cold War era in 1991, the year when the attention of US leaders began to seriously shift away from worrying about the Soviet threat toward debating America's role in the upcoming strategic era.

2. Jeremi Suri, “Clear Skies over the Horizon: American Grand Strategy from the Cold War’s End to 9/11,” *Orbis* 53, no.4 (2009): 611–627; Richard N. Haass, “The Squandered Presidency—Demanding More from the Commander-in-Chief,” *Foreign Affairs* 79, no.3 (2000): 136–137; Richard N. Haass, “Paradigm Lost,” *Foreign Affairs* 7, no.1 (1995): 43–58; Hal Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad: America’s Search for Purpose in the Post-Cold War World* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008); William Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Terry Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); John Lewis Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?,” Lecture delivered at Duke University, February 26, 2009. Available at tiss.sanford.duke.edu/documents/KEYNOTE.doc.

3. For scholars who perceive a coherent but failed American post-Cold War grand strategy, see Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014); John J. Mearsheimer, “Imperial by Design,” *The National Interest* 11, no. 1 (2011): 16–34; Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of US Diplomacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Christopher Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America’s Future Grand Strategy,” *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 86–124. For the defenders of this grand strategy, see Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment,” *International Security* 37, no. 3 (2013): 7–51; Peter Feaver, “American Grand Strategy at the Crossroads: Leading From the Front, Leading From Behind, or Not Leading at All,” in *America’s Path: Grand Strategy for the Next Administration*, ed. Richard Fontaine and Kristin M. Lord (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2012); Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (New York: Random House, 2012).

4. Terry L. Deibel, “Bush’s Foreign Policy: Mastery and Inaction,” *Foreign Policy* 84 (1991): 3–23. For similar judgments, see Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 100; Suri, “Clear Skies over the Horizon,” 615.

5. Eric Edelman, “The Strange Career of the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance,” in *In Uncertain Times: American Foreign Policy After the Berlin Wall and 9/11*, ed. Melvyn Leffler and Jeffrey Legro (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 68–69. Similarly, Richard Haass, an NSC staffer at the time, complained of how Bush was personally rather uncomfortable with “grand doctrine” and with debating “fundamental concepts and principles.” Haass quoted in Derek Chollet and James M. Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11: The Misunderstood Years between the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Start of the War on Terror* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), 9.

6. George H. W. Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Knopf, 2011), 400.

7. Eric A. Miller and Steve A. Yetiv, “The New World Order in Theory and Practice: The Bush Administration’s Worldview in Transition,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2001): 61.

8. Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 80.

9. Leffler and Legro, *In Uncertain Times*, 52.

10. David Callahan, *Between Two Worlds: Realism, Idealism, and American Foreign Policy after the Cold War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 66.

11. George H. W. Bush, “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union,” January 29, 1991. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=19253.

12. Jon Meacham, “The Hidden Hard-Line Side of George H. W. Bush,” *Politico Magazine*, November 12, 2015. Available at www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/11/jon-meacham-book-george-h-w-bush-213347.

13. Steve Yetiv, *Explaining Foreign Policy: US Decision-Making in the Gulf Wars*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 8.

14. *Ibid.*

15. James A. Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy* (New York: Putnam and Sons, 1995), 604–606.

16. The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, August 1991, 3. Available at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1991.pdf>.

17. This was a constant theme in Clinton’s efforts to gain approval for NAFTA and the free trade agenda. “I believe we have made a decision now that will permit us to create an economic order in the world that will promote more growth, more equality, better preservation of the environment, and a greater possibility of world peace. We are on the verge of a global economic expansion that is sparked by the fact that the United States at this critical moment decided that we would compete, not retreat.” William J. Clinton, “Remarks on Signing of NAFTA,” December 8, 1993. Available at <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3927>.

18. *Ibid.* Three years later, the same view was evident in a memo prepared for incoming Secretary of State Madeleine Albright: “At no time since our colonial period has American prosperity depended more profoundly on effective participation in, and leadership of, the world economy.” Quoted in Goldgeier and Chollet, *America Between the Wars*, 151.

19. Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, “Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy,” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1997): 5–53; Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?”; Suri, “Clear Skies over the Horizon.” Curiously, even as most scholars ignore the free trade component of US grand strategy, at the other end of this spectrum there is a small resurgence in some circles of a school of neo-Marxist interpretation as adopted by Christopher Layne and Andrew Bacevich, which regards the free trade agenda as continuing an Open Door policy of economic imperialism. See Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*.

20. Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 111, 156–57.

21. During the George W. Bush era, the United States signed free trade agreements with Jordan, Australia, Chile, Singapore, Bahrain, Morocco, Oman, Peru, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. It also negotiated three more agreements that were eventually ratified by the Obama administration in 2011, with Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. The Obama administration negotiated the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) with Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam, the largest free trade agreement in the world, but the new Trump administration has so far refused to support this new treaty.

22. Department of Defense, “FY 94–98 Defense Planning Guidance Sections for Comment,” February 18, 1992. National Security Archive, “The Nuclear Vault: The Mak-

ing of the Cheney Regional Defense Strategy, 1991–1992,” Washington, DC. Available at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb245/.

23. Patrick E. Tyler, “US Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop a One-Superpower World,” *New York Times*, March 7, 1992, A1.

24. The most comprehensive behind-the-scenes account of the formation of DPG, the many misconceptions surrounding it, and its legacy is offered in Edelman, “The Strange Career.” Edelman worked for Lewis Libby and Paul Wolfowitz in the Pentagon’s Office of the Secretary of Defense and was one of the drafters of the DPG. Previous detailed accounts can be found in James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush’s War Cabinet* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 208–214; and Chollet and Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars*, 44–47.

25. Bacevich, *American Empire*, 44–45.

26. Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 99; William C. Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World,” *International Security* 24, no.1 (1999): 5. Other scholars saw it as a precursor to Bush’s 2002 *National Security Strategy*, when some of the “neoconservatives” such as Paul Wolfowitz returned to government. For examples of such arguments and a convincing debunking of it, see Edelman, “Strange Career,” 72–74.

27. Edelman, “Strange Career,” 63–64.

28. *Ibid.*, 66. The early leaked draft was written by Zalmay Khalilzad, a mid-level Pentagon official at the time. For more on his role in the creation of the DPG, see the discussion in Zalmay Khalilzad, *The Envoy: From Kabul to the White House, My Journey Through A Turbulent World* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2016), 77–82.

29. Edelman, “Strange Career,” 67.

30. Paul Wolfowitz, “Shaping the Future,” in *In Uncertain Times*, ed. Leffler and Legro, 60.

31. “Our new strategy must provide the framework to guide our deliberate reductions to no more than the forces we need to guard our enduring interests—the forces to exercise forward presence in key areas, to respond effectively to crisis, to retain the national capacity to rebuild our forces should this be needed. Important American interests in Europe and the Pacific, in the Mediterranean and in the Persian Gulf—all are key reasons why maintaining a forward presence will remain an indispensable element of our strategy.” George H. W. Bush, “Remarks at the Aspen Institute Symposium in Aspen, Colorado,” August 2, 1990. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=18731.

32. Richard Cheney, “Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy,” 1. “The Nuclear Vault: The Making of the Cheney Regional Defense Strategy, 1991–1992,” Document 15, National Security Archive, 1993. Available at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb2451.

33. *Ibid.*, 6–9.

34. William W. Kaufmann and John D. Steinbruner, *Decisions for Defense: Prospects for a New Order* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1991), 47.

35. Cheney, *RDS*, 3.

36. For a detailed table showing this trend in US force structure development, see Posen, *Restraint*, 12.

37. US defense spending far surpassed that of its potential rivals, such as Russia or

China, for the entire 1991–2008 period under study. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, 2012. Accessed at <http://milexdata.sipri.org/>.

38. This is also the conclusion of James Mann: “After an initial review of defense issues, the Clinton administration preserved the general outlines and structure of the post-Cold War force structure that had been worked under Cheney,” Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans*, 214.

39. Among the most representative works of this school of thought, see Posen, *Restraint*; Layne, *Peace of Illusions* and “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing”; Bacevich, *American Empire*.

40. See, for example, Feaver, “American Grand Strategy at the Crossroads”; Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home, America”; Kagan, *The World America Made*; Michael Beckley, “The Myth of Entangling Alliances: Reassessing the Security Risks of US Defense Pacts,” *International Security* 39, no. 4 (Spring 2015); Francis Gavin, “Strategies of Inhibition: US Grand Strategy, the Nuclear Revolution, and Nonproliferation,” *International Security* 40, no.1 (Summer 2015): 9–46.

41. William J. Clinton, “Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in New York,” July 16, 1992. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25958.

42. For more details on Clinton’s attacks against Bush for being too cautious on foreign policy, see Chollet and Goldgeier, *American Between the Wars*, 36–42.

43. William J. Clinton, “Remarks to the 48th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City,” September 27, 1993. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=47119.

44. “Remarks of Anthony Lake—From Containment to Enlargement, Johns Hopkins University, September 21, 1993.” National Security Council, Speechwriting Office, and Antony Blinken, “Tony Lake—‘From Containment to Enlargement’ 9/21/93.” Available at *Clinton Digital Library*, <http://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/9013>.

45. The White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, July 1994, Preface. Available at <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1994/>.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*, 2.

48. *Ibid.*, 3, 6.

49. *Ibid.*, 22, 24.

50. *Ibid.*, 16–17.

51. *Ibid.*, 19.

52. *Ibid.*, 10.

53. All of Clinton’s *National Security Strategy* documents from 1994 to 2001 list “Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction” as a top priority.

54. Jeffrey Smith and Julia Preston, “United States Plans Wider Role in U.N. Peace Keeping,” *The Washington Post*, June 18, 1993, A1.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 123, 125.

57. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “Considerations of Honorable Les Aspin to

Be Secretary of Defense,” January 20, 1993 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), 6.

58. Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 182.

59. Thomas Friedman, “Clinton’s Foreign Policy: Top Adviser Speaks Up,” *New York Times*, October 31, 1993. It is also important to note that some, but not all, of the lessons of Somalia pointed toward nonintervention. As Friedman reports, Lake declared soon after the debacle that the administration had learned that “America does have interests and values at stake in places like Bosnia, Haiti and Somalia, however limited, and that the Administration needs to do a better job of explaining to the public what they are because it can be costly when you get involved.”

60. Quoted in George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human: A Political Education* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2008), 214.

61. White House, “PDD-25: Clinton Administration Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations,” February 22, 1996. Available at Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd25.htm.

62. Peter Feaver, interview with the author, May 23, 2013.

63. White House, NSS 1994, 10.

64. For the best account of the costs of nonintervention, see Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007).

65. William J. Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Vintage, 2005), 593.

66. James Bennet, “Clinton Declares U.S., with World, Failed Rwandans,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1998, A1.

67. “Memorandum for the President from Anthony Lake and Mark Gearan—September 17, 1994,” Clinton Presidential Library, Collection Title: “Records on communications between President Clinton and Anthony Lake regarding Haiti, from July 1, 1994 to September 25, 1994,” box 3, document ID 9407362.

68. Ibid.

69. James Steinberg, interview with the author, May 16, 2013.

70. For the definitive account of the decision-making process leading to the intervention in Bosnia, see Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America’s Bosnia Policy in 1995* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000). For the perspective of the leading US diplomat involved in solving this crisis, see Richard Holbrooke, *To End A War* (New York: Random House, 2011).

71. In the words of one anonymous senior adviser, it was a “cancer” on Clinton’s foreign policy that threatened his entire foreign policy agenda. Quoted in Power, *Problem from Hell*, 436.

72. For a detailed account of this shift in policy, see Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 81–116.

73. Chollet and Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars*, 130–33.

74. William J. Clinton, “Transcript of President Clinton’s Speech on Bosnia,” November 27, 1995. Available at www.cnn.com/US/9511/bosnia_speech/speech.html.

75. “Memorandum to the National Security Advisor from Ambassador Albright,” August 3, 1995. National Security Council and Records Management Office, “Declassified Documents Concerning Bosnia,” *Clinton Digital Library*. Available at <http://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/36591>.

76. “Summary of Conclusions for Meeting of the NSC Principals Committee,” Sep-

tember 21, 1995. National Security Council and Records Management Office, “Declassified Documents Concerning Bosnia,” *Clinton Digital Library*. Available at <http://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/36614>.

77. Ibid.

78. William J. Clinton, “Remarks at the United States Coast Guard Academy Commencement in New London, Connecticut,” May 22, 1996. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=52848.

79. A comprehensive politicomilitary account of the war can be found in Ivo H. Daalder and Michel E. O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000).

80. Jeremy Rosner, interview with the author, June 14, 2013.

81. William J. Clinton, “Address to the Nation on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro),” March 24, 1999. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=57305.

82. William J. Clinton, “Inaugural Address,” January 20, 1997. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=54183.

83. William J. Clinton, “Remarks at the Seventh Millennium Evening at the White House,” April 12, 1999. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=57396.

84. Clinton, “Address to the Nation on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets.”

85. Barry Posen, *Restraint*, 55–58.

86. Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*, 119–22.

87. For a good overview of the common criticisms, see William G. Hyland, *Clinton’s World: Remaking American Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999); Moises Naim, “Clinton’s Foreign Policy: A Victim of Globalization?,” *Foreign Policy* 109 (1997): 34–40; Michael Mandelbaum, “Foreign Policy as Social Work,” *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 1 (1996); Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad*; Suri, “Clear Skies over the Horizon”; Haass, “The Squandered Presidency.”

88. Quoted in John F. Harris, “Despite ‘Lessons,’ Clinton Still Seen Lacking Strategy,” *Washington Post*, March 27, 1999, A1.

89. Chollet and Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars*, 219.

90. Friedman, “Clinton’s Foreign Policy.”

91. Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2007), 133. This comment is used by Gaddis as evidence that Clinton resigned himself to having no grand strategy. Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?”

92. See Clinton’s *National Security Strategy* documents of 1994–2001, all of which list “Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction” as a top priority. All of these documents are available at <http://nssarchive.us/>.

93. Madeleine Albright, “Use of Force in a Post-Cold War World,” *Department of State Dispatch* 4, no. 39 (1993): 665–66.

94. Gavin, “Strategies of Inhibition.”

95. James Bennet, “Clinton Describes Goals for a Strike on Iraqi Arsenals,” *New York*

Times, February 18, 1998; CNN, “Text of Clinton Statement on Iraq,” February 17, 1998. Available at http://articles.cnn.com/1998-02-17/politics/transcripts_clinton.iraq_1_national-security-american-people-freedom. CNN, “Clinton: Iraq Has Abused Its Last Chance,” December 16, 1998. Available at www.cnn.com/US/981216/clinton.iraq.speech/.

96. US State Department Office of the Historian, “Denuclearization and the Two Koreas, 1993–2001.” Available at <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/two-ko-reas>. CNN, “Washington Was on Brink of War with North Korea 5 Years Ago,” October 4, 1999. Available at www.cnn.com/US/9910/04/korea.brink/.

97. For the most detailed account of Clinton’s efforts against Al-Qaeda, see National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004) and Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam’s War Against America* (New York: Random House, 2002).

98. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 163–97.

99. *Ibid.*, 150.

100. Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 140.

101. “Interview with Kissinger and Brzezinski,” *Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, December 21, 1998. Available at www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/july-dec98/iraq_12-21.html.

102. Walter Slocombe, “A Crisis of Opportunity,” in *In Uncertain Times*, ed. Leffler and Legro, 81.

103. Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, 94.

104. William J. Clinton, “Remarks at a Town Meeting in Detroit,” February 10, 1993. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46999.

105. Michael Dobbs and R. Jeffrey Smith, “U.S. Offers Assurances On NATO; Clinton Letter Raises Possibility ‘New Russia’ Could Join Alliance,” *Washington Post*, May 7, 1995.

106. William Wohlforth, “How Did the Experts Do,” in *In Uncertain Times*, ed. Leffler and Legro, 171.

107. Gaddis offers the following anecdote to explain his motivation for beginning to teach a grand strategy class at Yale University: “Let me begin with the event that caused us to begin teaching this class. The date was September 24, 1998. A NATO briefing team had invited itself to Yale to make the case for the Clinton administration’s policy of expanding the alliance eastward. There would be no problem about including the Czechs, the Poles, and the Hungarians, the briefers told us, because so much effort had gone into reorganizing committees in Brussels to make them feel welcome. The briefing concluded after about half an hour, and questions were called for. Our colleague Bruce Russett raised his hand and asked whether NATO expansion might not cause difficulties with the Russians, perhaps undermining President Yeltsin’s efforts to democratize the country, perhaps creating an awkward situation for the new or prospective members of the alliance as Russian power revived, perhaps even driving Russia into some new form of cooperation with the Chinese, thereby reversing one of the greatest victories for the West in the Cold War, which was the Sino-Soviet split. There was a moment of shocked silence. Then one of the briefers exclaimed, in front of our entire audience: ‘Good God! We’d never thought of that!’” Gaddis, “What Is Grand Strategy?”

108. John Lewis Gaddis, "History, Grand Strategy and NATO Enlargement," *Survival* 40, no. 1 (1998): 145.
109. William Drozdiak, "Poland Urges NATO Chief Not to Appease Russia: The Smell of Yalta Is Always with US," *Washington Post*, March 17, 1997.
110. Gaddis, "What Is Grand Strategy?" See also Stephen Sestanovich, "Why the United States Has No Russia Policy," in *Eagle Adrift: American Foreign Policy at the End of the Century*, ed. Robert Lieber (New York: Longman, 1997).
111. James Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When: The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1999), 52, 61, 152–74. Gaddis, "Grand Strategy and NATO Enlargement," 148–49.
112. Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Doors: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 25.
113. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When*, 40.
114. *Ibid.*, 44, 76.
115. "The President's News Conference with Visegrad Leaders in Prague January 12, 1994," *Clinton Public Papers* (1994), Book I, 40. Available at www.gpo.gov. See also Strobe Talbott, "Why NATO Should Grow," *New York Review of Books*, August 10, 1995.
116. "The President's News Conference with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in Moscow, May 10, 1995," *Clinton Public Papers* (1995), Book I, 663.
117. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When*, 77; Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door*, 27.
118. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door*, 99–111. In his memoirs, Strobe Talbott writes that in a meeting with Russian and American diplomats, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin "repeated threats and warnings we'd been hearing for years: there would be dire consequences for Russian reform; there would be military and political countermeasures (no ratification of outstanding arms control treaties, greater Russian reliance on nuclear weapons, stronger ties with Iran and China.)" This shows that the administration was fully aware of the possible downsides of NATO enlargement in regard to US-Russian relations. Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, 232–33.
119. In addition to Talbott's memoir supporting this view and former Pentagon adviser Walter Slocombe's essay cited above, the most extensive academic book-length treatment of these efforts to keep the two objectives in balance is offered in Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When*. In his concluding section, Goldgeier writes that "Numerous administration officials said in interviews that President Clinton did not view these objectives as contradictory; he did not view NATO enlargement as anti-Russian, and, his advisers say, he believed he could convince Yeltsin of his attitude. He was certainly conscious of the trade-off, however, since he told Yeltsin in 1994 that he would delay being explicit about the NATO enlargement until after the 1996 Russian presidential elections." Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When*, 160.
120. Jim Steinberg, interview with the author, May 16, 2013.
121. Nicole Ortung, "Hungary's Slide Into Authoritarianism and Europe's Toothless Response," *The Wilson Quarterly*, July 1, 2015. Available at wilsonquarterly.com/stories/hungarys-slide-into-authoritarianism-and-europes-toothless-response.
122. "Their [the NATO enlargement opponents'] near-term forecasts of costs—precisely the arguments of most relevance to pragmatic policymakers—were wildly off the mark." Wohlforth, "How Did the Experts Do," 173–74.

Chapter Eight: George W. Bush and the War on Terror

1. There is a large literature on the Bush Doctrine. See, for example, Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2003); Robert Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 365–88; Jack Snyder, “Imperial Temptations,” *National Interest* 71, no. 4 (2003): 29–40; Robert Jervis, “The Compulsive Empire,” *Foreign Policy* 137 (July–August 2003): 83–87; John Lewis Gaddis, “A Grand Strategy of Transformation,” *Foreign Policy* 133 (November–December 2002): 50–57; Neta C. Crawford, “The Road to Global Empire: The Logic of US Foreign Policy after 9/11,” *Orbis* 48, no. 4 (2004): 685–703; Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jonathan Monten, “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in US Strategy,” *International Security* 29, no. 4 (2005): 112–56; Stephen M. Walt, “In the National Interest: A New Grand Strategy for American Foreign Policy,” *Boston Review* 30, no. 1 (2005): 6–20; James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush’s War Cabinet* (New York: Penguin, 2004); Andrew Flibbert, “The Road to Baghdad: Ideas and Intellectuals in Explanations of the Iraq War,” *Security Studies* 15, no. 2 (2006): 310–52; Jack S. Levy, “Preventive War and the Bush Doctrine,” in *Understanding the Bush Doctrine*, ed. Stanley Renshon and Peter Suedfeld (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Robert Litwak, *Regime Change: US Strategy through the Prism of 9/11* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Brian C. Schmidt and Michael C. Williams, “The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists,” *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 191–220.

2. Peter Feaver, interview with the author, May 23, 2013.

3. These four principles are listed on the “Bush Doctrine” exhibit at the Bush Presidential Library, Dallas, TX.

4. George W. Bush, “Address to the Nation on the September 11 Attacks,” September 11, 2001, reprinted in *Selected Speeches of President George W. Bush 2001–2008*, 57.

5. As reported in Douglas J. Feith, *War and Decision* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 12.

6. Douglas Feith, interview with the author, June 4, 2013.

7. Peter Feaver and William Inboden, “Looking Forward through the Past,” in *The Power of the Past: History and Statecraft*, ed. Hal Brands and Jeremi Suri (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2015), 260–61.

8. George W. Bush, “Address to a Joint Session of Congress, September 20, 2011,” reprinted in *Selected Speeches*, 65–73.

9. *Ibid.*, 68.

10. Dan Balz and Bob Woodward, “America’s Chaotic Road to War: Bush’s Global Strategy Began to Take Shape in First Frantic Hours After Attack,” *Washington Post*, January 27, 2002, A1.

11. Dan Balz and Bob Woodward, “Bush Awaits History’s Judgment,” *Washington Post*, February 3, 2002, A1. Jane Perlez, David E. Sanger, and Thom Shanker, “A Nation Challenged—The Advisors: From Many Voices, One Battle Strategy,” *New York Times*, September 23, 2001, A1.

12. Michael J. Gerson, *Heroic Conservatism : Why Republicans Need to Embrace America's Ideals (And Why They Deserve to Fail If They Don't)* (New York: Zondervan, 2008), 81.
13. Phillip Zelikow, "Strategic Planning 2001–2002," in *In Uncertain Times: American Foreign Policy After the Berlin Wall and 9/11*, ed. Melvyn Leffler and Jeffrey Legro (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 105.
14. Bush, *Selected Speeches*, 58.
15. *Ibid.*, 69.
16. As Balz and Woodward summarized the atmosphere in the first few days after 9/11, "at that point nobody other than Tenet was even talking about dislodging the Taliban, only threatening to punish the regime if it didn't break with bin Laden." Balz and Woodward, "America's Chaotic Road," A1.
17. For the view of a Bush Doctrine as focused on regime change, see Daalder and Lindsey, *The Bush Revolution*, and Walt, "In the National Interest."
18. Balz and Woodward, "America's Chaotic Road."
19. Feith, *War and Decision*, 19.
20. Richard Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012), 344. For a detailed account of the extraordinary fear among top Bush officials of another imminent attack, possibly using weapons of mass destruction, see Peter Baker, *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House* (New York: Doubleday, 2013), 163–80, and also Philip Zelikow, "Strategic Planning," in *In Uncertain Times*, ed. Brands and Suri, 102–106.
21. For the academic debate surrounding the use of "preemption" vs. "prevention," see Jack S. Levy, "Preventive War and Democratic Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (2008): 1–24.
22. George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown, 2010), 229.
23. The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2002, 15. Available at www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf.
24. Walt, "In the National Interest."
25. Alan G. Stolberg, *How Nation-States Craft National Security Strategy Documents* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), 76.
26. Zelikow, "Strategic Planning," 116. In a recent study of all the memoirs coming from the Bush administration former officials, Melvyn Leffler similarly observes: "Notwithstanding its visibility at the time and its place in the journalistic and scholarly literature, Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Tenet, and Feith spend little or no time discussing it. Rice and Haass point out that it was drafted by Philip Zelikow, a friend of Rice's and former colleague on the National Security Council (NSC) staff." Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 2 (2013): 203.
27. Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* (New York: Crown, 2011), 154.
28. Gerson, *Heroic Conservatism*, 58.
29. George W. Bush, "Remarks on the Freedom Agenda," reprinted in *Selected Speeches*, 186.
30. Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 88. The preface to the 2006 *National Security Strategy* repeats this point: "And because free nations

tend toward peace, the advance of liberty will make America more secure.” The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of American*, 2006, Preface.

31. White House, NSS 2002, 3.

32. Gaddis, “Grand Strategy of Transformation.” For more similarities between the Bush Doctrine and other US grand strategies, see also John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). For the connections between democracy promotion and the Bush Doctrine, see Monten, “Roots of the Bush Doctrine.”

33. Baker, *Days of Fire*, 148.

34. Dan Balz and Bob Woodward, “Combating Terrorism: It Starts Today,” *Washington Post*, February 1, 2002, A1.

35. John Taylor, “Financial Reinforcements,” *Hoover Digest* 3 (June 19, 2007). Available at www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/2007-no-3.

36. Baker, *Days of Fire*, 158.

37. Feith, *War and Decision*, 133–34.

38. *Ibid.*, 101.

39. For a more complete list of top Al-Qaeda leaders killed or captured since 9/11, see Feith, *War and Decision*, 114–15.

40. Seth Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires: America’s War in Afghanistan* (New York: Norton, 2009), 100–101, 284.

41. Peter Bergen, *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict between America and Al-Qaeda* (New York: Free Press, 2011), 196.

42. Dana Bash and Tom Cohen, “Officials Cite Thwarted Plots, Oversight in Defending Surveillance,” *CNN Politics*, June 19, 2003.

43. Bergen, *The Longest War*, 197–213. Jones, *Graveyard of Empires*, 284–85.

44. Michael Morell with Bill Harlow, *The Great War of Our Time: The CIA’s Fight against Terrorism—from Al-Qaeda to ISIS* (New York: Twelve, 2015), 74.

45. Jones, *Graveyard of Empires*, 114–15. See also Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*, 166–67.

46. Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 377–78. For more on the inside of the government debate on the desirability of inserting more peacekeeping troops, see Jones, *Graveyard of Empires*, 109–115, and Feith, *War and Decision*, 100–102.

47. George W. Bush, “Address on the State of the Union,” January 2002, in *Selected Speeches*, 105–106.

48. *Ibid.*, 106.

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

51. This memo is discussed in Feith, *War and Decision*, 288.

52. Mearsheimer, “Imperial by Design,” 28. See also Paul R. Pillar, “Intelligence, Policy, and the War in Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (2006): 15–27, and Monten, “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine.”

53. See also the interpretation in Leffler: “What is clear in the memoirs is that the administration went to war in order to deal with a range of perceived threats—not to promote democracy, not to transform the Middle East, and not to secure supplies of oil.

All these matters, according to Bush, Cheney, Rice, Rumsfeld, Feith, and Tenet, were of secondary or tertiary importance, and mostly influenced behavior after ‘formal’ military hostilities ended in early April 2003.” Leffler, “The Foreign Policies of the Bush Administration,” 202.

54. This shift was clearly reflected in the administration’s rhetoric. Feith tabulated references to “threat” or “Saddam’s records” versus “Iraqi democracy” or “political future” before and after the war and noticed a dramatic reversal, from a ratio of 13.7 on threat as opposed to only 3.4 on democracy between September 2002 and July 2003 to 1.1 for threat and 10.1 for democracy promotion between July 2003 and September 2004. Feith, *War and Decision*, 476.

55. Steve Hadley, interview with the author, June 5, 2013. This meeting and debate is referenced by Rice in her memoir and confirmed by Hadley in an interview. Rice confirms the sequence; as she puts it, “We did not go to Iraq to bring democracy any more than Roosevelt went to war against Hitler to democratize Germany, though that became American policy once the Nazis were defeated.” Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 187.

56. Stephen Walt, “In the National Interest.” See also Litwak, *Regime Change*; Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine”; Jack Levy, “Preventive War and Democratic Politics.”

57. Condoleezza Rice, “Anticipatory Defense in The War on Terror,” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (2002): 5.

58. Ibid.

59. Feith, *War and Decision*, 229–33.

60. Bob Woodward, “Behind Diplomatic Moves, Military Plan Was Launched,” *Washington Post*, April 18, 2004, A1. As Rice also wrote later in her memoir: “Saddam Hussein was a cancer in the Middle East who had attacked his neighbors, throwing the region into chaos.” She also expressed some doubts, similar to Rumsfeld and Feith, about how the administration made the public case for the war to be more about WMDs and terrorism than about Saddam’s record of aggressive behavior: “what really should have anchored the argument was the problem of WMD in the hands of Saddam, not just the problem of WMD *per se* . . . Somehow all that Saddam had done and what he meant to stability in the Middle East was getting lost in the discussion.” Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 197–98.

61. Steve Hadley, interview with the author, June 5, 2013.

62. Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 422, 435.

63. Paul Wolfowitz, interview with the author, June 4, 2013.

64. “The President had an honest, well-grounded rationale, one that was not undermined by our failure to find WMD stockpiles in Iraq . . . Deciding how to keep the United States security is a large responsibility. President Bush approached the task with a sense of peril heightened by the 9/11 catastrophe. He reviewed the ways that the United States and other had tried to counter the Iraqi threat over the last decade: diplomatic protests, Security Council resolutions, weapons inspections, economic sanctions, no-fly zones, no-drive zones, and limited military strikes. We had attempted every reasonable means short of war.” Feith, *War and Decision*, 224.

65. Leffler, “The Foreign Policies of the Bush Administration,” 214.

66. Bush, *Decision Points*, 229.

67. Ibid., 228.

68. Ibid., 257.

69. For an overview of this period, see Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006).

70. For a detailed account of the “Surge” process, see Peter D. Feaver, “The Right To Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision,” *International Security* 35, no. 4 (2011): 87–125; Peter R. Mansoor, *Surge: My Journey with General David Petraeus and the Remaking of the Iraq War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013); Bob Woodward, *The War Within: A Secret White House History 2006–2008* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008).

71. For more on General Petraeus and the Surge, see Thomas Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006–2008* (New York: Penguin, 2009).

72. Stephen Biddle, Jeffrey A. Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro, “Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007?,” *International Security* 37, no. 1 (2012): 7–40; David Petraeus, “How We Won in Iraq,” *Foreign Policy*, October 29, 2013, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/29/how-we-won-in-iraq/>.

73. Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 145. See also William Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 322–25.

74. For the most elaborate rebuttal of the “lack of planning” argument, see Feith, *War and Decision*, 360–91.

75. Bush, *Decision Points*, 259, 268.

76. Glenn Kessler, “U.S. Decision On Iraq Has Puzzling Past: Opponents of War Wonder When, How Policy Was Set,” *Washington Post*, January 12, 2003, A1. See also “The Iraq War—Part II: Was There Even a Decision?,” in *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book* No. 328, ed. John Prados and Christopher Ames, October 1, 2010. Available at <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB328/>.

77. Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 435.

78. Stephen Hadley, “Americans Can Be Proud of What Was Achieved in Iraq,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 30, 2014; Charles Krauthammer, “The Bush Legacy,” *Washington Post*, April 25, 2013, A14; Meghan L. O’Sullivan, “Ten Years after the Iraq War: Believe It or Not, We’re Safer Now,” *New York Times*, “Room for Debate: Was It Worth It?,” September 18, 2015. www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/03/19/the-iraq-war-was-it-worth-it-ten-years-after-the-iraq-war-believe-it-or-not-were-safer-now.

79. Mearsheimer, “Imperial by Design”; Walt, “In the National Interest.”

80. For a positive appraisal of Bush’s strategy in the War on Terror, see Timothy J. Lynch and Robert S. Singh, *After Bush: The Case for Continuity in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Stephen F. Knott, *Rush to Judgment: George W. Bush, the War on Terror, and His Critics* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2012). For a critique, see Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier, “Good Riddance to the Bush Doctrine,” *The Washington Post*, July 13, 2008.

Chapter Nine: Shape or Adapt?

1. As Colin Dueck put it recently, the National Security Strategy “can be a chance for incoming officials to think through fundamental issues, including long-term trends and

challenges; establish some hierarchy of goals, priorities, and threats; consider how the policy pieces fit together; and start building internal consensus and cohesion, by giving everyone their say upfront. The beginning of a new administration is exactly the right time to do this. For all of these reasons, the prompt completion of a serious national security strategy should be a top priority for the next president.” Colin Dueck, “Strategic Planning for the Next President, Part Two: Recommendations for the NSC Process,” *FPRI E-Notes*, January 2016. Available at <http://fpri.org/article/2016/01/strategic-planning-next-president-part-two-recommendations-nsc-process>. See a similar argument in James Goldgeier and Jeremi Suri, “Revitalizing the US National Security Strategy,” *Washington Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 35–55.

2. William Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Terry Deibel, *Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

3. Richard Danzig, *Driving in the Dark: Ten Propositions about Prediction and National Security* (Washington, DC: Center for A New American Security, 2011), 11. He is drawing this conclusion based on Philip Tetlock, *Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 44.

4. Danzig, *Driving in the Dark*, 15.

5. Williamson Murray, “Introduction,” in *Successful Strategies: Triumphant in War and Peace from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4.

6. For recent contributions on how to improve the strategic planning process, written largely from a Grand Strategy school perspective, see Dueck, *Strategic Planning*; Frank Hoffman and Ryan Neuhard, “Avoiding Strategic Inertia: Enabling the National Security Council,” *Orbis* 60, no. 2 (Spring 2016): 217–36; Charles Ries, *Improving Decisionmaking in a Turbulent World* (Washington, DC: RAND, 2016); Peter Feaver and William Inboden, “Implementing an Effective Foreign Policy,” in *Choosing to Lead: American Foreign Policy for a Disordered World* (Washington, DC: The John Hay Initiative, 2015), available at www.choosingtolead.net/implementing-an-effective-foreign-policy; Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?*; Paul Miller, “Organizing the National Security Council: I Like Ike’s,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (September 2013): 592–606; Richard Haass, “Planning for Policy Planning,” in *Avoiding Trivia*, ed. Daniel W. Drezner (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2009); James R. Locher, *Forging a New Shield: Project on National Security Reform* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of the Presidency, 2008); Aaron L. Friedberg, “Strengthening US Strategic Planning,” *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2007–2008): 47–60.

7. Christopher Hammer, *American Pendulum: Recurring Debates in US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

8. For a brief attempt to tease out such variables and conditions, see Ionut C. Popescu, “Grand Strategy vs. Emergent Strategy in the Conduct of Foreign Policy,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* (February 10, 2017). Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1288109>.

9. Hugh Courtney, *20/20 Foresight: Crafting Strategy in an Uncertain World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2001), 4–5.

10. For a longer discussion of how these four levels of strategic uncertainty could be applied to national security planning, see Ionut C. Popescu, “Strategic Uncertainty, The Third Offset, and US Grand Strategy,” *Parameters* 46, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 1–12.

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